A HISTORY OF THE MILLING AND BAKING INDUSTRY AT THE HEATH UTTOXETER

The Heath Windmill Uttoxeter circa 1900

John Walker

1990

FOREWORD

John Walker in 2007

In 1986 having worked at the Heath Bakery, Uttoxeter for over forty years I decided to write a bit about its history from the time it had been a Corn Windmill, then a bakery and grocery shop to the time our family the Walkers ran it as a bakery. In 1990 when I retired I had a few copies of A History of Milling and the Baking Industry on The Heath printed to give to family and friends. The history I wrote twenty nine years ago is much the same but with the development of the internet and the availability of sources online during that time I have been able to add more information which in 1986 could not so easily have been found and would have required numerous visits to Staffordshire Record Office, the William Salt Library and reading through hundreds of old newspapers at Uttoxeter Library or in Stafford. The old newspapers on the British Newspaper Archive present a wealth of 'new' information on the owners and occupiers of the windmill on Uttoxeter Heath.

I am grateful to my friend and fellow Uttoxeter local historian Jim Foley for converting the history to a digital format that has made it easier for it to be edited and updated. I have added more information about the discovery of the old photo of the Heath Windmill which but for the particular circumstances at the time might never have been found or identified. Now I am very pleased the history will be available online to a lot more people and will hopefully be there for posterity.

John Walker

Hermitage Gardens

Uttoxeter

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INTRODUCTION

My father John James Walker bought the Heath Bakery, Uttoxeter in 1929 when I was just a year old and continued working there for thirty five years. The windmill for grinding corn which once stood on the site was long gone. The Heath Bakery is situated on an area of high ground to the north west of Uttoxeter down a short lane off Heath Road. In 1948 when I was twenty I started working there for my father and in 1964 I took over the business from him and worked there for twenty six years. In 1986 when I started to write the history of the bakery I was fortunate to have the deeds for the windmill passed on to me by my father. More information was added to the history in 1989 thanks to Lynne Brown of Beechcroft - a house mentioned later in this short history. I had always been on the lookout for a photo or painting of the windmill but despite numerous enquiries and searches I never had any success. Then in November 1990 just before I retired from work at the bakery almost unbelievably a photograph of the old windmill came to light but more on that later.

At first I intended to make a list of historical events connected with the windmill and the bakery but then decided to record more details, stories and events during my own time at the bakery. Over many years I got to know a lot of interesting people doing my rounds in and around Uttoxeter. They are all part of its history.

The Heath - if one can imagine it devoid of all buildings - is in quite an elevated - 345 feet (105 m) above sea level - and commanding position over the surrounding area. Thus if we look back three centuries, this area of exposed heathland would be an ideal position for the siting of a windmill and its accompanying industries - overlooking the small town of Uttoxeter.

Now even today, bracken, that most tenacious of plants still grows in the patch of waste land between the laundry and the school.

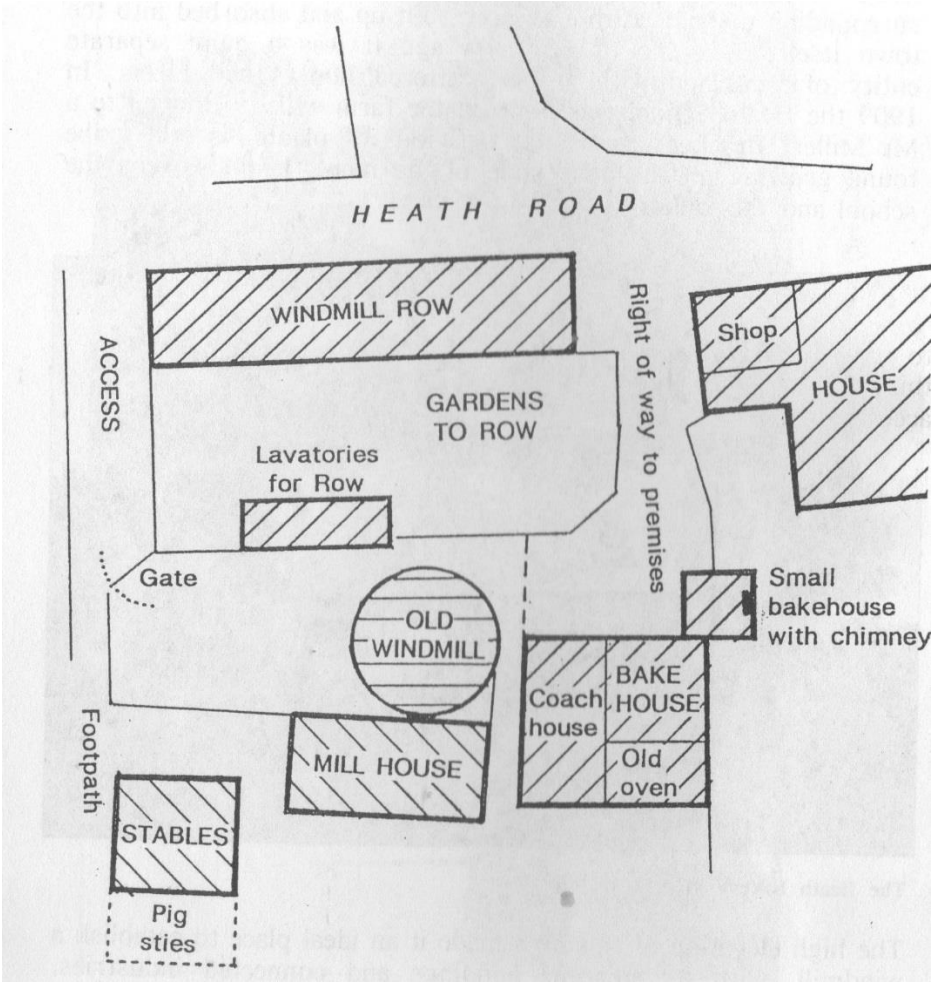
The windmill must have been an impressive sight standing five storeys high at maybe 40 - 50 feet high with its four sails adding perhaps another 15 to 20 feet. What a

noise it must have made when the sails were turning. As windmills were reliant on the wind when the need arose they would have to be worked whenever the wind blew even if that was in the middle of the night. The noise from the stones grinding the corn would have been very loud inside the windmill. In its working hey-day the buildings consisted - as can be seen from the plan of the Windmill, the Millhouse where the miller and his family lived, stables, piggeries, bakehouse and also a drying kiln and an old coal house but the whereabouts of these two latter buildings are now unknown. There was also a quarter acre of meadow with the mill. As far as I am aware the Heath Bakery is the only building in the district which is still being used for its original purpose after three hundred years. Windmill Row, a row of small cottages nearby had no connection with the windmill but was more than likely named after it. The houses were built for the occupation of brick makers and their families who worked in several brickyards on The Heath. Those cottages like the windmill are now gone.

The windmill, considered by its structure and the type of brick used, would more than likely date from about 1690-1720. This was the opinion of past local historians and researchers and it is also my own opinion but at the moment I can only find records going back about 180 years to 1808.

You have to keep in mind that there was competition at this time from the corn watermills not far away from the Heath Windmill including Uttoxeter Mill the nearest one, Stramshall, Fole and Lower Tean all on the River Tean, Burndhurst and Blythe Bridge at Kingston on the River Blythe and possibly one at Field. Doveridge Mill was about two miles away across the River Dove in Derbyshire.

1883 Ordnance Survey Map showing the Heath Windmill



Plan showing location of the windmill, the mill house and the bakery and the buildings nearby in Gregory's time. Windmill Row had no connection with the windmill.

In the deeds for the Windmill there is a description of the windmill and mill house in 1862 and the buildings associated with it, as well as the names of the occupiers of

the mill. It was described as **"All that messuage, dwellinghouse or tenement with stable piggeries drying kiln & other outbuildings garden & appurtenances thereto belonging and situate at the Heath in the parish of Uttoxeter aforesaid and also all that Windmill situate near to**

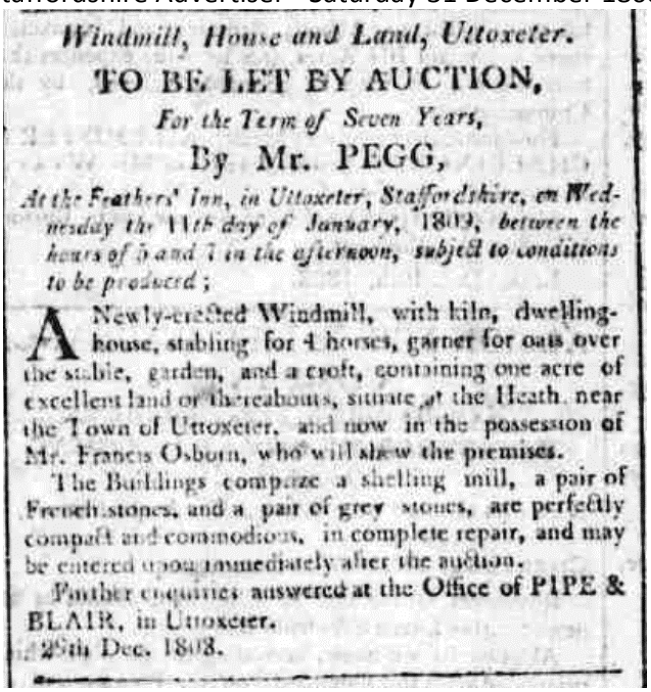
or adjoining the said messuage and also all wheels Mill stones, machinery and other Fixtures & appurtenances and also all that close piece or parcel of land upon part whereof the said Messuage House and all other buildings erected situate at the Heath aforesaid and containing by estimate with site of the said Messuage Windmill & or Buildings & the said Garden 2 rood 35 perches or thereabouts all which said premises were heretofore in the occupation of Francis Osborne onwards of James Finney William Harrison successively then of the said Thomas Gerrard since of William Saxelby and now of the said John Gregory."

It was also described as **"being on high exposed ground and may be worked without intermission throughout the year"**. The deeds do not specify whether these people were the owners or the tenants or occupiers of the windmill but searches at the County Record Office and in old newspapers did provide some answers. Some were said to be "in possession" of the windmill which presumably means they owned it and others were said to be "in occupation" which could mean they possibly leased the windmill. For some reason the deeds do not mention Mr Humphrey Abberley who it would appear from an old 1808 newspaper advert owned the mill after Francis Osborne. I have put a copy of the deeds at the end of this history. There are many things about the old Heath Windmill which are still a mystery but maybe one day more information will become available or some researcher in the future may unearth long forgotten documents. It would be interesting to find out about any descendants of the millers at The Heath Windmill.

THE EARLY MILLERS AT THE HEATH WINDMILL

On a visit to the County Record Office in Stafford the earliest reference to the windmill on The Heath that I could find was in an advertisement which appeared in the Staffordshire Advertiser of 31 December 1808, offering Windmill, House and one acre of land to be let situated at The Heath near Uttoxeter describing it as "newly erected." I believe that it might have been re-built using its original bricks - as were many other windmills over the years. Two hundred and ten years ago in 1808 Francis Osborn was the first owner of the newly-erected windmill on the Heath. It was obviously a corn mill as it had a shelling mill, a pair of French stones and a pair of grey stones. Mr Pegg of the Feathers Inn, Uttoxeter was the auctioneer. The Feathers Inn or to give it its full name The Plume of Feathers was on the corner of High Street and Smithy Lane now called Smithfield Road. The Feathers was later renamed The Smithfield Inn.

Staffordshire Advertiser - Saturday 31 December 1808



Windmill, House and Land, Uttoxeter.

TO BE LET BY AUCTION,

For the Term of Seven Years,

By Mr. PEGG,

At the Feathers' Inn, in Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, on Wednesday the 11th day of January, 1809, between the hours of 5 and 7 in the afternoon, subject to conditions to be produced;

A Newly-erected Windmill, with kiln, dwelling-house, stabling for 4 horses, garner for oats over the stable, garden, and a croft, containing one acre of excellent land or thereabouts, situate at the Heath, near the Town of Uttoxeter, and now in the possession of Mr. Francis Osborn, who will shew the premises.

The Buildings comprize a shelling mill, a pair of French stones, and a pair of grey stones, are perfectly compact and commodious, in complete repair, and may be entered upon immediately after the auction.

Further enquiries answered at the Office of PIPE & BLAIR, in Uttoxeter.

29th Dec. 1808.

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From an advertisement in the Staffordshire Advertiser in 1810 when the windmill was offered for sale it would appear that Mr Aberley had purchased the Windmill from Mr Francis Osborne the previous owner. There was a Mr Humphrey Aberley the owner of a malthouse in Church Street and it could well have been him. In the advert on March 10 Mr Aberley offered the capital windmill for sale on March 14 at the Talbot Inn, Uttoxeter. He can't have been able to sell the windmill for on March 24 he advertised to be let at an auction at the Feathers Inn on April 11, 1810.

Staffordshire Advertiser - Saturday 24 March 1810
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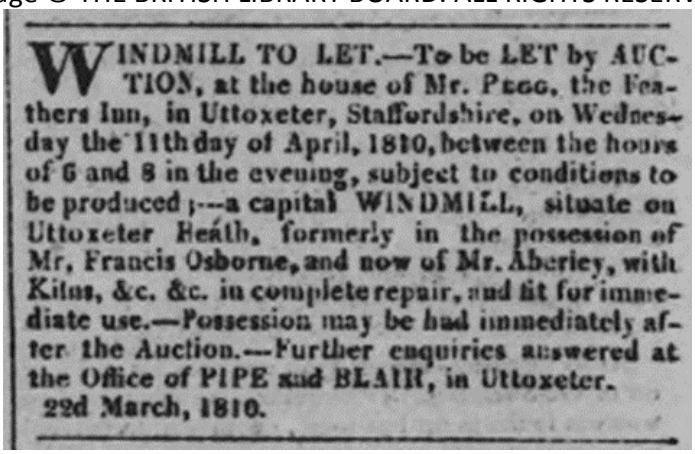

WINDMILL TO LET.—To be LET by AUCTION, at the house of Mr. Pegg, the Feathers Inn, in Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, on Wednesday the 11th day of April, 1810, between the hours of 6 and 8 in the evening, subject to conditions to be produced;—a capital WINDMILL, situate on Uttoxeter Heath, formerly in the possession of Mr. Francis Osborne, and now of Mr. Aberley, with Kilns, &c. &c. in complete repair, and fit for immediate use.—Possession may be had immediately after the Auction.—Further enquiries answered at the Office of PIPE and BLAIR, in Uttoxeter.
22d March, 1810.

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A document at Staffordshire Record Office D3882/5/17 Item 16 reveals that a John Osborn sold the windmill, messuage and land at The Heath in the parish of Uttoxeter, on 21 Dec 1814 to William Harrison of Butterton near Leek. One wonders what relationship John Osborne had with Francis Osborne the previous owner. If Mr Aberley had bought the windmill from Francis Osborn why is he not mentioned in the extract above when the windmill was sold to William Harrison? The deeds mention a James Finney who came between Francis Osborne and Wm Harrison but perhaps he leased the windmill rather than being the owner as there is no other evidence of him.

Four years later in 1818 the windmill was advertised for sale. It doesn't look as if it sold for in February 1824 it was advertised to be sold by auction at The Hope and Anchor with Mr Brown as the auctioneer. It was described as a Freehold Windmill, House and Land at Uttoxeter being extremely well situated and

commanding a considerable business. It was again advertised for sale in January 1825 when Mr Harrison of Butterton near Leek is given as the owner of the windmill. From this it would appear that Mr Harrison had continued to own the windmill since 1814 when he bought it. Mr Harrison it seems lived at Greenlow Head, Butterton and on the same page advertised his house in Butterton for sale with 11 acres. The auction was held at The Hope and Anchor on January 22nd 1825 with Mr Hobson as the auctioneer. This time William Harrison managed to sell the windmill as the same document D3882/5/17 Item 18 shows the messuage, windmill, land and premises was sold by William Harrison to Thomas Gerrard from Rocester on March 25th 1825 who mortgaged it with Mr H Brushfield for 500 years on 29 April 1925.

There was a Thomas Gerrard who was a miller at Milwich Mill, Garshall Green for five years from 1824 to 1829. There is the possibility that this is the same Thomas Gerrard who bought the Heath Windmill but we can't be certain. Mr Harrison had owned the windmill for eleven years 1814-1825. The question is, did he employ a Master Miller and Journeymen millers at the windmill or did he rent it out?

WILLIAM SAXELBY AT THE HEATH WINDMILL
Circa 1834 – 1857
Windmill owned by Thomas Gerrard 1825-1861

Although Thomas Gerrard bought the windmill in 1825 we do not know if he worked it himself or if he rented it out. At some stage William Saxelby became Thomas Gerrard's tenant at the Heath Windmill. William Saxelby was a Master Miller born in 1801 in Thorporrow, Yorkshire. In 1822 he married Lydia Cadman in Wirksworth. In 1821 he was in Mayfield where his son also named William was born. In 1824 he was a miller in Swinscoe in Blore not far from Mayfield where his daughter Susannah was born. Swinscoe is on the A52 not far from Ashbourne on the road to Leek. The earliest I can place William Saxelby at the Heath Windmill is 1834 when his name appears in White's 1834 Directory of Staffordshire when he is listed as a corn miller at The Heath. He would have been 33 years old. His father also William Saxelby a widower described as a huckster of Uttoxeter died that year. The 1835 Poll Book reveals that Thomas Gerrard of Woodhouse Fields, Alton is the owner of property on The Heath with William Saxelby as his tenant. William Saxelby is listed in the Pigot's 1835 Directory as a miller at The Heath as is Joseph Bradshaw of nearby Uttoxeter Water Mill on the River Tean. Entries in the following years confirm that Thomas Gerrard was the owner of the windmill with William Saxelby as his tenant.

Thomas Gerrard seems to have invested in corn mills: in 1834 Thomas Gerrard was at Doveridge Mill and in 1838 he was at Park Mill, Froghall but was still the owner of the freehold mill on The Heath with William Saxelby as his tenant. Mr Gerrard's ownership and Mr Saxelby's tenancy of the windmill are confirmed by the 1839 Tithe Map. Details for Plot no. 485 list the following: House, Windmill, Buildings, Garden and Croft with Mr Gerrard the owner and Mr Saxelby the occupier. The Tithe Map reveals that William Saxelby was himself the owner of a number of properties and land nearby: Plot 487, House, Garden and Rope Walk, House and Garden, House and Garden and 486 Gardens with sundry tenants. Mr Saxelby's

name again appears in various trade directories Pigot's 1842, Slater's 1850 and White's 1851.

There were quite a number of Gerrards who were millers in the area and before we move on it is worth noting that in 1851 census we find John Gerrard the Elder at Cubley Mill 12 miles away in Derbyshire, William Gerrard two miles away across the county border at the corn mill in Doveridge in Derbyshire, Joseph Gerrard in Alton where George Gerrard was a corn dealer and finally Joseph Gerrard who was miller journeyman in Rocester 4 miles away.

In the 1841 census William Saxelby was entered as a miller aged 40 living on The Heath with his wife Lydia, 45, their son William also a miller aged 20 and a daughter Susanna aged 15. On his marriage certificate in September 1842 William Saxelby the younger is entered as a miller when he married Uttoxeter woman Jane Shaw at St Mary's Parish Church. On February 4 1844 the parish records show that a son John was baptized to William and Jane Saxelby at St Mary's father miller. The 1851 census reveals that William Saxelby Jun. born in 1818 did not follow in his father's footsteps as a miller but became a provision dealer with a shop in Bradley Street, Uttoxeter.

The details of Thomas Gerrard's will dated April 13 1850 are given in the deeds of the windmill wherein he decreed that when the eldest of his four grandchildren reached the age of 21 the windmill together with the house garden and appurtenances were to be sold and the proceeds to be divided equally among them. The children's father William Gerrard, Thomas' son, had died and presumably Thomas wanted his grandchildren to be well cared for after his own death. Thomas Gerrard died in March 1853 and William Saxelby continued as a tenant of the mill but to the trustees of Thomas Gerrard.

In the 1851 census William Saxelby was a master miller aged 50 employing one man living on the Heath with his wife Lydia aged 57 and daughter Susan a dress maker aged 26. Millers were often suspected of adding cheaper ingredients to their flour

to increase their profits and in 1856 William Saxelby was prosecuted for doctoring his flour at the windmill by adding the much cheaper pig meal to add to the weight of the flour he was selling. He wasn't the only miller from Uttoxeter to have added substances to the flour and that year he appeared with W. Titley of Titley's or Uttoxeter Water Mill and W Clerk of Kingston Mill who had committed similar offences. Whenever dishonest millers were prosecuted and fined local people were very happy and in this case they applauded when the judgment was made.

Leicester Chronicle - Saturday 15 March 1856
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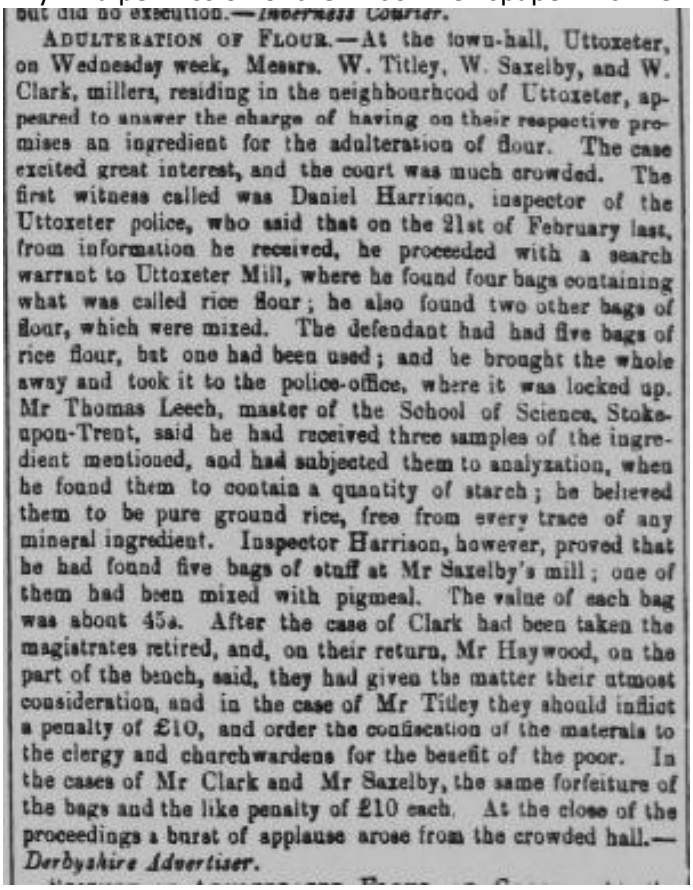

but did no execution.—*Inverness Courier.*

ADULTERATION OF FLOUR.—At the town-hall, Uttoxeter, on Wednesday week, Messrs. W. Titley, W. Saxelby, and W. Clark, millers, residing in the neighbourhood of Uttoxeter, appeared to answer the charge of having on their respective premises an ingredient for the adulteration of flour. The case excited great interest, and the court was much crowded. The first witness called was Daniel Harrison, inspector of the Uttoxeter police, who said that on the 21st of February last, from information he received, he proceeded with a search warrant to Uttoxeter Mill, where he found four bags containing what was called rice flour; he also found two other bags of flour, which were mixed. The defendant had had five bags of rice flour, but one had been used; and he brought the whole away and took it to the police-office, where it was locked up. Mr Thomas Leech, master of the School of Science, Stoke-upon-Trent, said he had received three samples of the ingredient mentioned, and had subjected them to analyzation, when he found them to contain a quantity of starch; he believed them to be pure ground rice, free from every trace of any mineral ingredient. Inspector Harrison, however, proved that he had found five bags of stuff at Mr Saxelby's mill; one of them had been mixed with pigmeal. The value of each bag was about 45s. After the case of Clark had been taken the magistrates retired, and, on their return, Mr Haywood, on the part of the bench, said, they had given the matter their utmost consideration, and in the case of Mr Titley they should inflict a penalty of £10, and order the confiscation of the materials to the clergy and churchwardens for the benefit of the poor. In the cases of Mr Clark and Mr Saxelby, the same forfeiture of the bags and the like penalty of £10 each. At the close of the proceedings a burst of applause arose from the crowded hall.—*Derbyshire Advertiser.*

https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000172/18560315/001/0001
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William Saxelby didn't seem to learn from his time in court for in 1857 he was again summoned to appear in court charged again with adulterating flour. At the Petty Sessions on the 11th of February 1857, before Lord Waterpark and T P Heywood Esq. Mr Wm Saxelby of the Uttoxeter Windmill appeared on a summons charging him with having alum on his mill and premises for the purpose of adulterating flour.

Sergeant Johns and police-constable Peak proved the finding of a small bag containing about 1lb.3 oz., and a large three strike bag containing about 4 lb., on the mill and premises, the small bag being openly exhibited on a shelf in the mill, and the large bag being secreted in the premises adjoining it. Mr Bagshaw, in defence, called a man named George Fisher, who said he was in the habit of dressing mill stones and had done Mr Saxelby's in April or May last; that alum was the principal ingredient in the mixture he used for such dressing and he remembered leaving a bag containing alum resembling the small bag produced in the mill, but had never seen the large bag on the premises. Mr Bradshaw and Mr Gerrard, millers, also stated it to be the custom to use alum in dressing the stones. The bench retired, and after consultation, convicted the defendant in the mitigated penalty of 40s, and £1 costs. Another charge of selling flour which had been mixed with some ingredient not the produce of wheat was withdrawn.

It would appear that shortly after this William Saxelby left the windmill and Uttoxeter. One can only assume that he lost a lot of customers. He had been at the windmill for at least 23 years. He would have been 56 years old at this time. William Saxelby's son William stayed on in Uttoxeter and continue with his grocery shop in Bradley Street.

It is more than likely that John Gregory was working as a miller for William Saxelby and he became Thomas Gerrard's next tenant at the Heath Windmill. We can place him at the windmill from a report in Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal of Friday 08 January 1858. The report confirms that millers did work in the early hours of the morning and that the windmill being very tall John Gregory would have immediately seen the fire from one of the windows which faced towards Oldfield.

ALARMING FIRE. — On Wednesday morning, about three o'clock, the house of Mr. T. Wakefield, cabinet maker, Old Field, Uttoxeter, was discovered by Mr. Gregory, of the Windmill on Uttoxeter Heath, to be on fire. Mr. Wakefield resided alone in the house, and was not aware of the fact until the fire had made considerable progress. An alarm was made in the town directly, and by the exertions of those who first got to the place some of the furniture in the lower rooms of the house was rescued. The fire brigade was brought into action as soon as possible, but the engine station being nearly a mile from the house it could not be brought into play in time to be of much use. The house—a very good one—was burnt down (excepting the bare walls), including the beds and furniture in the upper rooms; the adjoining shop was also destroyed, together with the timber, and some new furniture and tools. The house, the property of Joseph Bladon, Esq., was insured. Four hayricks, the property of Mr. Wakefield, standing near, would undoubtedly have taken fire if the wind had been in that direction.

By kind permission of the British Newspaper Archive.

Thomas Gerrard's eldest grandson William attained the age of 21 on July 26 1861 and soon after his will was proved on September 9 the Heath Windmill was advertised for sale by public auction at the Hope and Anchor a public house not far from the windmill. John Gregory was the occupier of the windmill. It is worth noting that at this time the windmill machinery was complete and in good condition and obviously in working order.

Valuable Wind Corn Mill, Dwelling House and Land to be sold by Auction on November 28th 1861.
All that valuable Wind Corn Mill, situate and being at the Heath, Uttoxeter with Mill Stones, Sails, Fixtures and Machinery appertaining thereto; and also all that Messuage, Dwelling House or Tenement, with Bakehouse, Oven, Stabling, Piggeries, Drying Kiln and other Outbuildings adjoining or standing near to the said Mill, with Yard, Garden and appurtenances thereto belonging; and also all that close, piece or parcel of Land adjoining or lying up to the said Mill, Messuage, Dwelling House or tenement and buildings now in the occupation of Mr John Gregory. The Windmill is advantageously situated close to the town of Uttoxeter and about half a mile from the Uttoxeter railway stations, and being on high and exposed ground may be worked with little intermission throughout the year. The Machinery is very complete and in good condition.

In 1861 John Gregory bought the windmill and became the owner and occupier. He had only been a tenant for a brief period but it is more than likely he worked for William Saxelby.

THE GREGORYS AT THE HEATH WINDMILL
Circa 1858-1903

In the 1860 Post Office Directory John Gregory is listed as a miller on The Heath with no sign of William Saxelby the previous tenant. The 1861 census reveals that John Gregory aged 36 and listed as a miller and baker was living at The Heath with his wife Lucy 33 and children William 5, Dorothy 2 all born in Uttoxeter. That same year his wife Lucy gave birth to triplets at the windmill with the Staffordshire Advertiser reporting on Saturday 17 August 1861 "On Sunday morning last Mrs. Gregory, wife of Mr. Gregory, of the windmill Uttoxeter, was safely delivered of three children. The whole are girls, and are healthy and doing

The deeds to the windmill show that John Gregory's bid of £502 was the highest in the auction of the windmill at the Hope and Anchor pub in 1862. As I said earlier it is likely that he worked as miller under William Saxelby and for a short period was the next tenant when William Saxelby left. John Gregory was born in Mackworth, Derbyshire in 1825 and in 1851 was working as a journeyman miller for his uncle John Wartnaby in Upper Broughton, Nottinghamshire. The earliest I can place him in Uttoxeter is February 1855 on his marriage to Miss Lucy Sleigh of Uttoxeter in the Independent Chapel, Uttoxeter. It would seem that John Gregory was a religious man. The Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal of Friday 27 February 1863 reported that the annual Shrove Tuesday tea meeting of the Primitive Methodists of Uttoxeter was held in the Red Lion Room on Tuesday week. The Rev. J. Cooke occupied the chair and addresses were delivered by Messrs. Gregory, miller and other speakers.

Some interesting stories about John Gregory appeared from time to time in local newspapers. He had quite a few misfortunes at this time. Windmills depended entirely on the wind and the only thing worse than little or no wind was stormy weather. John Gregory's windmill seems to have suffered a number of misfortunes due to storms in a short period of time including an injury to John Gregory himself. The Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal of Friday 11 December 1863 reported "The wind on Thursday last produced a number of casualties more or less severe. Mr Gregory of the Uttoxeter Windmill, while attempting to take the canvas from the sails to check their rapid revolution, other means failing to do so, was blown from the platform which he had ascended for that purpose, and an arm broken and sustained other injuries. Many tree were blown down." Just two months later on Friday 19 February 1864 the same newspaper reported "The severe wind of Friday night last broke the sails of Uttoxeter corn wind mill, flung one of the sails to the ground, and a stop was put to the work of the mill until the necessary repairs have been effected."

One has visions of the sails hurtling round and round or being rocked on their pivot with the brakes keeping them from turning but still causing much damage. It would have been costly and time-consuming to repair the sails and without the sails no corn could be ground with no flour to bake bread.

Misfortune struck the Gregory family again on March 10 1864 when one of their triplet daughters three year old Lucy died.

John Gregory thought he had a bargain when he bought some cheese at Uttoxeter Market. In January 1869 the Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal reported that Mr. Gregory of Uttoxeter Wind Corn Mill on Wednesday week bought fourteen cheeses from a stranger in Uttoxeter Market-place, and, in the parts where they were tried by the person who had them to sell, they proved to be of excellent quality. On Mr. Gregory testing them again at his own residence, he found them to be the most repulsive article possible. The trick was readily accounted for on close inspection being made of the cheese; in certain parts good cheese had been inserted. Mr. Gregory, of course, lost no time in returning the cheese, and in getting the money back which he paid for it.

John Gregory's reputation as a baker in Uttoxeter seems to have reached its peak about this time. A few weeks later a report in the Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal of Friday 19 February 1869 had the following "The old custom of family bread-making is all but discontinued by the good housewives of Uttoxeter, and the monopoly of manufactured bread for the town has fallen almost exclusively into the hands of Mr. Gregory, of Uttoxeter corn windmill. Gregory's bread has acquired quite a local fame, and it is supplied to shops and families in Uttoxeter to the extent of about 600 stones per week."

In the 1871 census John Gregory aged 45 called himself a Miller & Baker living with wife Lucy 44, children Dora 12, Risdon 10, Catherine and Elizabeth twins 9, John aged 5.

In September 1877 John Gregory was fortunate to receive a short contract from the Uttoxeter Board of Guardians to supply bread, flour and oatmeal to the Workhouse which was just a hundred or so yards away on what is now called Holly Road. It would have been a good financial contract as at that time there would have been about ninety inmates at the workhouse as well as numerous tramps

calling for food and the contract was usually renewed for another three or six months. The provisions supplied were not of the highest quality and were described as seconds as this was requested by the Board of Guardians: "Good seconds bread, 2s.3d. per stone; seconds flour, 2s 3d.; oatmeal, 1s.4d." Presumably the oatmeal was used for porridge for the inmates. Newspaper accounts show that he continued to supply Uttoxeter Workhouse for the next eighteen years.

It must have been around this time that the windmill was no longer working. W G Torrance in Following Francis Redfern Part V11 wrote "The old wooden sails, two sails with slats, and two being only bare poles, were unfit for work in the 1870s, but the solidly built brick structure was dismantled only after the First World War and the bricks were used to build a house for the late Mr Austin in Holly Road known as Beechcroft." In the 1870s Torrance who lived near the windmill would have been in his late teens so we can take it that what he wrote is more than likely correct. The 1881 census confirms this with John Gregory's occupation as baker and grocer whereas in the previous censuses his occupation was miller.

On February 16th 1881 he was caught in Doveridge selling bread without being supplied with weights and scales and in June he was charged with the offence which he admitted and was fined 1s. and 9s. 6d. costs. That same month his wife Lucy died aged 56. They had been married twenty six years. In the census later that year we find John Gregory aged 55, widower, Baker and Grocer and no longer called himself a miller which could only mean that the windmill was no longer working. Living with him were his children Dora 22, Richard 21 Baker, Kitty and Elizabeth twins 20 and John 16 Baker. Richard was probably Risdon who later took over the business. His eldest son William 25 a baker was married and living nearby with his wife Annie 22. William died in June 1881.

In 1882 widower John Gregory aged 56, married 32 year old Martha Mason a servant woman from Church Street, Uttoxeter. In April 1882 the Master of the Workhouse reported that buns had been supplied to the inmates of the Workhouse on Good Friday by Mr J Gregory.

In May 1883 it was reported in the Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal that John Gregory of Uttoxeter, baker, was charged at the instance of William Robinson of Sudbury, gamekeeper, with using a certain dog for the purpose of taking game on the 30th of March. The complainant stated that the defendant came along the road on the day in question in a baker's cart with a dog, and when near Sudbury he sent the dog into a field, and it put up a hare and ran it towards the road, and defendant eagered it on. Defendant stated that the dog was not his property, but was one that had followed him. A fine of £1 and costs was inflicted.

John Gregory suffered further misfortunes and it would appear that he was ill. In July 1886 John Gregory, miller, &c, of Uttoxeter was charged at Uttoxeter Petty Sessions with having a pair of coal scales which were 1 lb. against the purchaser. Fined 5s. and 9s.6d costs. The same defendant was also charged with having in his grocer's shop a 1 lb. weight which was six drachms too light. He again pleaded ignorance of the fact, owing to recent illness but was fined 5s. and 9s.6d costs.

Despite all this in March 1887 John Gregory's tender to supply the Workhouse for six months was accepted at a meeting of the Uttoxeter Board of Guardians. He supplied bread at 1s. 3d., flour 1s. 3d per stone, oatmeal 11d per 8 lbs., Indian meal 17s. 6d per 240 lbs. He continued to supply the Workhouse until his death in 1895 and his son John continued with the contract for a short while.

John Gregory was still connected with the Wesleyans for in July 1889 a local newspaper reported that the teachers and scholars connected with the Wesleyan Sunday School enjoyed their annual summer treat on Thursday afternoon last week, in a field situated on the Heath, which had been kindly lent by Mr. J. Gregory of the Wind Mill. A variety of games was indulged in, and very happy time was spent by the little folks, a number of prizes being given for racing & c. A capital tea was supplied on the ground, and in the evening cheers were given to Mr. Gregory for lending the field and ministering to their comfort in other ways.

More misfortune followed and in January 1890 John Gregory, baker, of Uttoxeter was charged by Inspector Coleman, Royal Society P.C.A. with allowing one of his horses to be worked while in an unfit state on 30th December 1889. It appeared that a youth named Phillips was in charge of the horse and cart at Sudbury, delivering bread, and on the horse being examined a large raw wound was found on the should, the collar coming in contact with it, and the animal seemed in much pain, and was quite unfit to work. Witness asked Phillips if his master knew of the sore, and he said that he did, but was not aware of how bad it was. He ordered the horse to be taken out of car. The defendant now admitted that he knew the horse had a sore, but had no idea it was as bad as it really was, as he had not examined it on account of his being very busy, but it was entirely against his wish to be cruel to any anima. He was fined £1 and 11s.6d. costs.

In the 1891 census John Gregory 66 called himself a Grocer and Baker, no longer calls himself a miller and gave his address as Grocer Shop the Heath. His new wife Martha is aged 42 and their young daughter is aged 7. John's son also called John, a baker aged 25, is living with them as is daughter Dora aged 32.
In March 1891 his contract for supplying provisions to Uttoxeter Workhouse was extended to six months: good bread at 1s. 5d. per 16 lb., flour at 1s 6d. per stone, meal, &c.

A year later in March 1892 the contract was increased to 12 months: bread at 1s 5d. per 16 lbs., flour at 1s. 10d and 1s. 6d. per stone, oatmeal 1s. per 8 lbs., Indian Meal 14s. per 240 lbs., sharps 15s. 6d per 240 lbs.; bran 6s. per 100 lbs. Another contract was for supplies to the workhouse was given in September: good seconds bread, per 16lbs. 1s 3d., good seconds flour per 14lbs. 1s. 4d.,best flour per 14lbs. 1s. 6d., oatmeal per 8 lbs. 11d., Indian Meal per 240 lbs. 14s. 6d., bran per cwt. 5s. 3d., sharps per cwt. 7s. John Gregory's contract with the Workhouse continued until his death in 1895.

John Gregory died on June 18th 1895 and was buried in Uttoxeter Cemetery where a simple headstone marks his grave. He was seventy years old and had been at the Heath Windmill for about thirty five years. During that time it seems he had done well for himself. Not only did he own the windmill and mill house with its land he also owned several properties on The Heath which he had bought over the years. In the August after his death all his properties were advertised for sale by the trustees of his will and split into five lots. The windmill and mill house were bought by his son John Gregory for £750.

On 22 August 1895 the estate of John Gregory deceased including the windmill and mill house was sold in lots at auction by Messrs. Walker, Wilkinson and South at The Royal Oak in Uttoxeter. The sale of all his properties amounted to £22,285 a large sum of money. Without seeing a copy of his will there is no way of knowing what debts he had and who the beneficiaries were.

Results of sale of the estate of John Gregory including the windmill and mill house.

Lot 1 All that shop and dwelling house containing dining room, kitchen, scullery, cellar, and five bedrooms with garden adjoining situate on the Heath, Uttoxeter and late in the occupation of the deceased. A successful general grocery business has been carried on for many years on these premises.

Bought by Mrs Wellsby for £430.

Lot 2 All those seven dwelling houses situate on the Heath, Uttoxeter and now in the several occupations of Mrs Tatlow, John Johnson, George Hudson, Charles Greatrex, Mrs Capewell, George Shipley and Edwin Durose producing a gross yearly rental of £12 9s.6d. Bought by Miss Gregory for £555. Was this Dorothy John Gregory's daughter and sister to John Gregory Jun.?

Lot 3 All that windmill with the existing machinery and fixtures thereon and belonging together with the bakehouses, ovens, stable, buildings and yard adjoining. Also all that dwelling house known as Mill House with the garden adjoining in the occupation of Thomas Ford at a gross yearly rental of £9 2s. And also all that field of rich old turf land called Heath Close adjoining containing 4a.0r. 33 perches. As said earlier this lot was bought by John Gregory's son John Gregory Jun. for £750.

Lot 4 A field of rich old turf land with cowhouse and shed containing 2a. 1h.

Bought by Mr E Sheldon for £310.

Lot 5 Two cottages at Heath Cross in the occupation of John Gregory and George Marsh. Bought by Mr R T A Hardy for £240.

From the deeds it appears that in order to buy the windmill John Gregory Jun. borrowed £400 from Charles Mynors of Sudbury at a rate of £4 percent per annum. Although John Gregory became the beneficial owner of the windmill he was the tenant of his lender/mortgagee Charles Mynors and had to pay him a yearly rent of £20 a year paid half yearly. But it seems from the deeds that John Gregory also borrowed £250 from his sister Dorothy Gregory to make up the amount of £750 purchase price.

In March 1896 John Gregory was awarded a contract for six months to supply provisions to the workhouse: Bread at 1s. per 16 lbs., flour 1s. 1d. per stone, best flour 1s. 3d. per stone, oatmeal 11d per 8 lbs., Indian Meal 12s. per 240 lbs., brand and sharps 5s. per cwt.

Unfortunately John Gregory the son did not do so well and just two years later in August 1897 he advertised the windmill, machinery, bakery, the Mill House for sale saying he was leaving the town. He calls it old windmill rather than a working windmill.

Staffordshire Advertiser 14 August 1897

To be Sold by Auction by Messrs. South and Wilkinson at the Royal Oak inn, Uttoxeter on Tuesday 25th day of August 1897 at Five or Six o'clock in the evening precisely. All that OLD WINDMILL with the existing machinery and fixtures thereon and belonging thereto, together with the bakehouses, ovens, stables, buildings and yard adjoining as staked out and situate on the Heath, Uttoxeter. Also all that dwelling house known as Mill House with garden adjoining and the road leading thereto. Also all that field of rich old turf land called the Heath Close adjoining containing 3a. 3r. and 0f. The whole of the above property is in the occupation of the owner Mr John Gregory who is leaving the town. Possession may be had by Michaelmas.

On October 6th 1897 John Gregory placed an advert in the Manchester Evening News. It looks like a last minute desperate attempt to sell the business before he was declared bankrupt. His excuse for selling the business was that he was leaving town.

For Sale, the Goodwill of an old-established Baking Business doing 22 sacks per week; also the following valuable Freehold Property including bakehouses, ovens, stable, buildings and yard, dwelling house with garden, three acres of rich old turf land, old windmill &c., splendid chance; leaving town. For further particulars apply to John Gregory, the Heath, Uttoxeter.

On October 15th 1897 John Gregory Jnr. was declared bankrupt and C.F. South was appointed trustee of the estate. It appears that John Gregory's sister took on the debt and the ownership of the bakery. In 1898 his brother Risdon borrowed the £400 from M.A. Bennion and L.J. Bennion to pay off his brother's debt to Charles Mynors. Risdon Gregory became the beneficial owner of the bakery and continued to run the business while the Bennions the lenders held the ownership. He was listed in Kelly's Directory of 1900 as a baker on The Heath.

In the 1901 Census Risdon Gregory 41 is listed as a baker on The Heath with his wife Louisa and two daughters Doris 4 and Daisy 2. Near neighbours are Henry Gerrard widower 50 Brewer Journeyman and Miriam Wright niece 25. Joshua Bloor 25 a baker is living in New Road and was probably working for the Gregorys at this time.

Risdon Gregory tenure of the Heath Bakery didn't last very long for sadly he died on July 15 1903 aged 43. In 1904 his wife Louisa, the sole beneficiary of his will, put the Mill House, the grocer's shop, storeroom, bakehouse, ovens, outbuildings, yard and land for sale when it was bought by Joshua Blore. In September 1904 Risdon Gregory's widow Louisa married Frederick Chandler from Derbyshire and moved away from Uttoxeter.

Staffordshire Advertiser - Saturday 03 September 1904

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THE HEATH, UTTOXETER.—SALE of FREEHOLD DWELLING-HOUSE, GROCER'S SHOP, and LAND. —To be SOLD by AUCTION, by

MESSRS. W. S. BAGSHAW and SON, at the LION HOTEL, UTTOXETER, on WEDNESDAY, the 14th day of September, 1904, at Three for Four o'clock in the Afternoon, in the following or such other Lots as may be determined upon at the time of Sale, and subject to Conditions of Sale to be then produced and read :—

All that MESSUAGE or DWELLING-HOUSE, situate on The Heath, Uttoxeter, known as Mill House, together with the Grocer's Shop, Storeroom, Bakehouses, Ovens, Outbuildings, and Yard adjoining thereto, and occupied therewith, and also the road leading thereto.

Also, all that Field of rich OLD TURF LAND, called the Heath Close, adjoining, containing in the whole 3A. 3R. or thereabouts, and now in the occupation of Mrs. Risden Gregory.

The Property is in good repair. The Outbuildings comprise Stabling for three horses, two Pigsties, Stoverooms, and Loose Shed.

The Property has for many years past been used as a Bakery, and recently a Grocer's and Provision Dealer's business has been added, in which a good lucrative trade is carried on.

To View the Property, apply to Mrs. RISDEN GREGORY, The Heath, Uttoxeter; and further particulars may be obtained from the AUCTIONEERS, Uttoxeter; or Mr. F. S. HAWTHORN, Solicitor, Uttoxeter.

JOSHUA BLORE BAKER & GROCER
THE GOLD MEDAL BAKERY
1904-1929

It was probably in the last few years of Old John Gregory's life that he took on Joshua Blore as a young apprentice. Joshua Blore was born on May 24th, 1877 and was the second son of Thomas Critchlow Blore a retired farmer from Calton near Waterhouses who in retirement lived with his wife at The Sycamores, New Road, Uttoxeter. I remember the old couple well, I used to take bread there for my dad when I was still at school. Jos would probably have started working for John Gregory in 1891 when he was 14 years old. When Old John Gregory died Jos continued to work at the Heath Bakery for his son John Gregory Jnr. and later his other son Risdon Gregory. When Joshua Blore bought the windmill and bakery in 1904 he was living with his wife Miriam and her uncle Henry Gerrard in the house and shop at the top of the lane leading down to the old windmill. How Jos came to meet and then marry Miriam makes for a romantic story.

Henry Gerrard in his pony and trap at the back of his shop on The Heath. The road down to the bakehouse is on the other side of the fence. The backs of the houses on Windmill Row are in the background.

Old Henry had a sister Mrs Wright, married to a gamekeeper who lived at Flagpole Cottage at Alton Towers. The Wrights had a daughter Miriam who came to Uttoxeter to look after her Uncle Henry and help keep shop at The Heath. Incidentally - Miriam's brother was a gardener at Woodseat and he had a son Trevor Wright named

after my grandad at Rocester - Trevor Forrester. Trevor Wright went into the South African Police.

Miriam Wright and the young baker Jos Bloor soon became acquainted and were engaged to be married. They were married on Christmas Day 1902.

Jos was a most exemplary man - he was already a part-time soldier in the Uttoxeter Volunteers and an excellent baker and confectioner. From an old photograph we know that Joshua Blore was a member of the Uttoxeter Volunteers and took part in a military exercise on Salisbury Plain in 1900.

The Uttoxeter Volunteers at Salisbury Plain 1900.
Back row from left: unknown, unknown, Tom Hollins, George Stubbs, Jos Blore, Tom Lunn, Jack Prince.
Front row from left: Dido Prince, unknown, Jim Motteram.
Photo courtesy Gerald Blore son of Jos Blore.

When Jos first married Miriam, they of course lived at the house and shop of her uncle Henry Gerrard. In 1904 they bought the bakehouse, windmill, mill house and everything from Risdon Gregory's widow Louisa. Jos's business thrived and he had some new ovens installed. This was a completely new building with a blue tiled roof and part of it, on one side of the stoke hole as we called it, was built on their own garden.

Jos and his wife had a daughter and three sons - Vincent, Gerald and Oswald. Jos was 28 years old when he won the Gold Medal for bread at the International Exhibition in London in open competition - this was in 1905 - he won it again the following year 1906. These were astonishing achievements and the Heath Bakery was known as the Gold Medal Bakery for the rest of Jos Blore's time there. His list of awards can be seen on the 1928 bill head further down. Not everyone in Uttoxeter it seems was pleased with his achievement as can be seen in the letter below in Uttoxeter Advertiser in 1905. There must have been a lengthy exchange of letters in the newspaper as the editor has to end the correspondence.

Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal - Friday 29 September 1905
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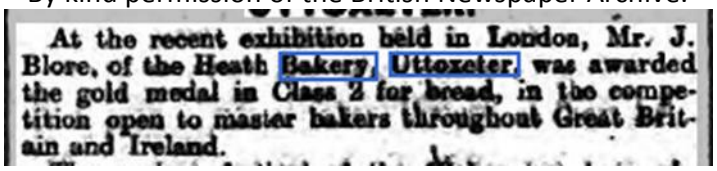
At the recent exhibition held in London, Mr. J. Blore, of the Heath Bakery, Uttoxeter, was awarded the gold medal in Class 2 for bread, in the competition open to master bakers throughout Great Britain and Ireland.

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It would appear that not everyone in Uttoxeter was impressed by Joshua Blore's awards. The letter below in a local newspaper it seems was only one instance of an ongoing correspondence on the matter between Joshua Blore and another baker a certain Mr Elkes.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the 'Uttoxeter Advertiser.'

A LOCAL SUCCESS (!) AND A CHALLENGE.

Dear Sir,—Re above, in my last letter which appeared in these columns I gave a truthful account of my recent success, stating that I was awarded the honour by the Master Bakers' and Confectioners' Society, London, a Society of which I am a member, and who publish a trade journal. When I say that there are over 6,000 bakers and confectioners who are subscribers, the inhabitants will at once comprehend that it is a Society of no small, insignificant order.

Mr. Elkes, who has done his utmost to injure me, has endeavoured to hold me up to public ridicule—striven to prove to the public I was an impostor, etc., etc.; and after all his ungentlemanly statements, after failing in his stigmatical efforts to reduce me to a pulp I am still surviving. This being so naturally irritates Mr. Elkes. Therefore he commences to sling mud at the Society. The Society will survive also, and possibly Mr. Elkes will be able to discover this fact. I feel justly indebted to Mr. Elkes for placing my business before the public. I believe in advertising; but I may say, through Mr. Elkes's kindness and your valuable columns I really could not have succeeded in bringing the "Staff of Life," famed for its excellence and purity, before the inhabitants of the town and district with the same success. I am pleased to say I have the confidence of a very large percentage of the residents and fellow tradesmen. The proof of this is the large increase in my output, and that confidence I shall strive to maintain by being straightforward and honest in my business transactions.

In return for the confidence already placed in me, I shall ever endeavour, as a townsman, to give every satisfaction to my numerous customers, with a combination of quality and courtesy.

I take the Editor's information that Mr. Elkes has handed the £1 1s. over, and the public can take my word that they shall have Blore's Gold Medal Bread; it is "(H)all Marked"!

Thanking you, Mr. Editor, for so kindly giving me the above space in your valuable paper,

I remain, yours faithfully,

J. BLORE.

Heath Bakery, Uttoxeter, November 13, 1905.

(This correspondence must now cease.—Ed.).

Joshua made good use of the pigsty at the Heath Bakery and from newspaper reports it seems he raised prize pigs and won a few awards for his efforts. On July 25 1908 the Staffordshire Advertiser had the following headline on one of its articles A Pig with Eight Legs and reported that Mr J Blore, baker of Uttoxeter, had recently amongst a litter of pigs, one with eight legs, four ears and two tails, but died soon afterwards and has been preserved.

After Henry Gerrard's death the house and shop became Jos and Miriam's property. The Mill House was now no longer required and was let to William Brassington who worked on the railway.

In the 1911 census Joshua Bloor 34 was a baker/grocer living at the Heath Bakery with his wife Miriam 35 and three young sons Gerald 6, Vincent 4, Oswald 2 and daughter Lilian 7, Miriam's mother Elizabeth Wright 69 and Miriam's uncle Henry Gerrard 60. William Brassington 52 railway porter was living with his wife and family at the Mill House.

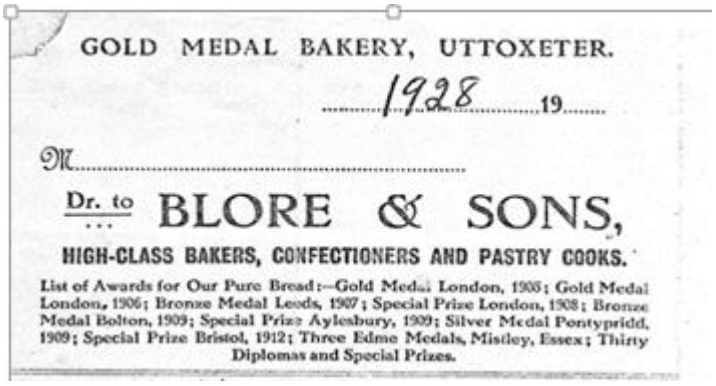
Joshua Boor and his wife Miriam, nee Wright.

In a 1912 Directory there is an entry for Joshua Blore, baker & grocer at 75 Heath Road, Heath, Uttoxeter. In Bennett's 1914 Business Directory there is an entry for J BLORE (Gold Medalist) baker & confectioner, Gold Medal Bakery, The Heath. In the Staffordshire Advertiser of 30 January 1915 it was reported that the Uttoxeter Board of Guardians had received a letter from Mr J Blore the baker who supplied bread to the workhouse to thank the Board for granting an increase on the contact price of bread supplied. So it looks as if the Board continued to use the Heath Bakery to supply the Workhouse as it had in John Gregory's time.

In August 1914 Great Britain was drawn into a war in Europe which became known as The Great War. In August 1915 Jos patriotically volunteered to do his bit for King and Country and at 37 years of age went off to serve as a baker in the Royal Army Service Corps in France leaving his wife Miriam to cope as best she could with the Heath Bakery and to look after their four young children.

When Jos went to the War his customers all told him they would come back to him on his return. In fact Percy Parker, a baker who had worked for Jos, started his own bakery business and, human nature being as it is, took Jos's customers to help his own business. In 1917 the contract for supplying bread to the Workhouse was given to Messrs. Parker and Son.

Joshua was demobilized in 1919. When he returned after the war - at 41 he was only a shadow of his former self - he had suffered war wounds and had been gassed. He struggled to regain his former business - taking his own sons into the business - but he was too ill to carry on and his health gradually deteriorated. His wife helped to mix bread and run the business but to no avail.
Sometime in 1920 Joshua sold the remains of the old windmill to W Austin who bought the bricks to build a house in nearby Holly Road. Unfortunately a man called John Mellor was actually living in the lower portion of the old windmill and a court order had to be obtained to eject him from the property.


GOLD MEDAL BAKERY, UTTOXETER.

1928 19

M.....

Dr. to ... BLORE & SONS,

HIGH-CLASS BAKERS, CONFECTIONERS AND PASTRY COOKS.

List of Awards for Our Pure Bread:—Gold Medal London, 1905; Gold Medal London, 1906; Bronze Medal Leeds, 1907; Special Prize London, 1908; Bronze Medal Bolton, 1909; Special Prize Aylesbury, 1909; Silver Medal Pontypridd, 1909; Special Prize Bristol, 1912; Three Edme Medals, Mistley, Essex; Thirty Diplomas and Special Prizes.

Courtesy Gerald Blore son of Jos Blore.

In September 1929 my father John James Walker bought the Heath Bakery from Joshua Blore who died a few months later in 1930 at the age of 53. An obituary appeared in the Uttoxeter Advertiser.

After an illness extending over a number of years, the death occurred at The Heath, Uttoxeter, at the age of 53, of Mr. Joshua Blore, second son of Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Blore, of Newroad, Uttoxeter. Deceased had been confined to his bed since October, and during the past month had been gradually sinking, so that his passing was not unexpected by his wife and family (a daughter and three sons). Mr. Blore was born at Calton and was apprenticed to the bakery trade with Mr. Gregory at the Heath Bakery, on whose death he took over the business on his own account and conducted it for 30 years up to September last, when Mr. J. J. Walker became the proprietor. Mr. Blore served in France throughout the war, joining the Army in May, 1915, and being demobilised in July, 1919. His illness was attributed to his war service. Before the war deceased was a member of the Uttoxeter Territorials and the old Volunteers. The funeral takes place at Uttoxeter Cemetery to-day (Wednesday).

Uttoxeter Advertiser

Joshua's wife Miriam Blore left the house and shop to her nieces - Sargeants from Alton, and after a short time in their possession they sold it to Jack Elliott and his wife. I don't know exactly when the Mill House was pulled down - but I would say in the 1940s. All this adjacent property was sold to Uttoxeter Town Council. Only the old stables were left standing or Farmer's Barn as we called it.

THE WALKERS AT THE HEATH BAKERY
1929 - 2012

My parents John James and Olive Walker, nee Forrester who ran the Heath Bakery from 1929 to 1964

The Heath Bakehouse. The windmill had stood where the small building and the green electricity transformer are on the right. The millhouse was behind. See plan of old site below.

In 1929 when my father John James Walker bought the Heath Bakery. His father, also named John James Walker, was a qualified and experienced baker and was

able to teach him all he needed to know about the bakery business. I ought to say something here about my grandfather John James Walker (1873-1938). He was born in Bridgnorth and when he left school he was an apprentice in the bakery trade for seven years. His first job was as a baker at Miss Buntings in Carter Street, Uttoxeter where he met my grandma who was a housemaid there. They married and he got a job as a baker with Andrew Dwyer at his Rocester general stores and shop. My grandfather was in charge of the bakery department. Dwyers attended Uttoxeter Market and every Wednesday my grandfather came with a covered horse-drawn van and set up Dwyers' stall on the pavement by the slightly cornered pavement where Allports shop was in Market Place.

My grandfather John James Walker (1873-1938) is on the left around 1897 when he worked for Andrew Dwyer in Rocester. Ezra Woodward holding the large pork pie is on the right. He later left to go as a baker at Howkins Bakers in Market Street, Uttoxeter. The name of the boy sitting on the shafts is not known.

After Andrew Dwyer's death his son Tom took over the business. In the 1930s the shop struggled and eventually was put up for sale. My father tried to persuade my grandfather to buy it but he wouldn't and instead went into partnership with Ernest Salt who was in charge of the grocery side of the shop. Grandad trusted people and would never see any evil in anyone. The shop was called Salt & Walker

for a couple of years. Things were not going well and the auditors were called in. Just before the auditors arrived my grandad was at his home in West View, Rocester having dinner - when Jack Holmes – a lad who worked at the shop called. Jack said, "Are you ready to go back to work Mr. Walker?" Grandad said "Yes" and Jack replied "Well you have no need to. The place is on fire. The Fire Brigade is there and the butter is running all down the street". My grandad never really got over it. He used to come on the bus from Rocester each day and help my dad at the Heath Bakery. He wasn't a well man and died a few years later in 1938 at the age of 66. He was a great help to my father in his early years at the bakery.

Staffordshire Advertiser - Saturday 28 May 1938
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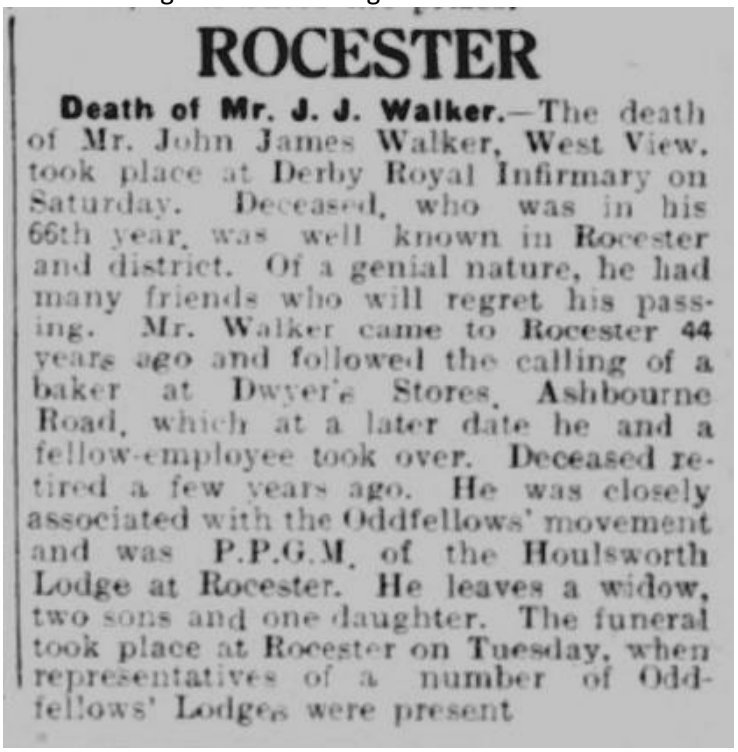

ROCESTER

Death of Mr. J. J. Walker.—The death of Mr. John James Walker, West View, took place at Derby Royal Infirmary on Saturday. Deceased, who was in his 66th year, was well known in Rocester and district. Of a genial nature, he had many friends who will regret his passing. Mr. Walker came to Rocester 44 years ago and followed the calling of a baker at Dwyer's Stores, Ashbourne Road, which at a later date he and a fellow-employee took over. Deceased retired a few years ago. He was closely associated with the Oddfellows' movement and was P.P.G.M. of the Houlsworth Lodge at Rocester. He leaves a widow, two sons and one daughter. The funeral took place at Rocester on Tuesday, when representatives of a number of Oddfellows' Lodges were present

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My parents didn't live at the bakery as there was no longer a house attached to it but at Fairfield Road a short walk away. The shop and house at the top of lane down to the Bakery were no longer connected with the bakery. During the thirty years of Jos Blore's incumbency at the bakehouse he and wife Miriam had lived there.

My father's first job at the Heath Bakery was to deal with the bakery buildings which had been neglected. There was a hole in the bakehouse roof over the loft door and building was all in poor repair. My father had the hole in the roof repaired, put a new floor put in the flour loft, removed the hoist that Josh had used to hoist the flour up to the flour loft and built stairs to the first floor instead of having to use a wall ladder to get up there.

My parents worked the business up although things were very difficult as this was the great depression of the 1930's. They worked long hours and on Tuesday nights would work all night to get things ready for Market Day on the Wednesday. My parents did a lot of competition work in the 1930s, and they both won many prizes. My father exhibited bread and my mother decorated cakes. My mother, who was an artist, took her best prize at the International Exhibition in London - it would be about 1938. She took second prize - a silver medal - for an iced Christmas cake in open competition to the world. The cake which gained first prize was from Johannesburg in South Africa and in fact only arrived a few hours before the judging took place.

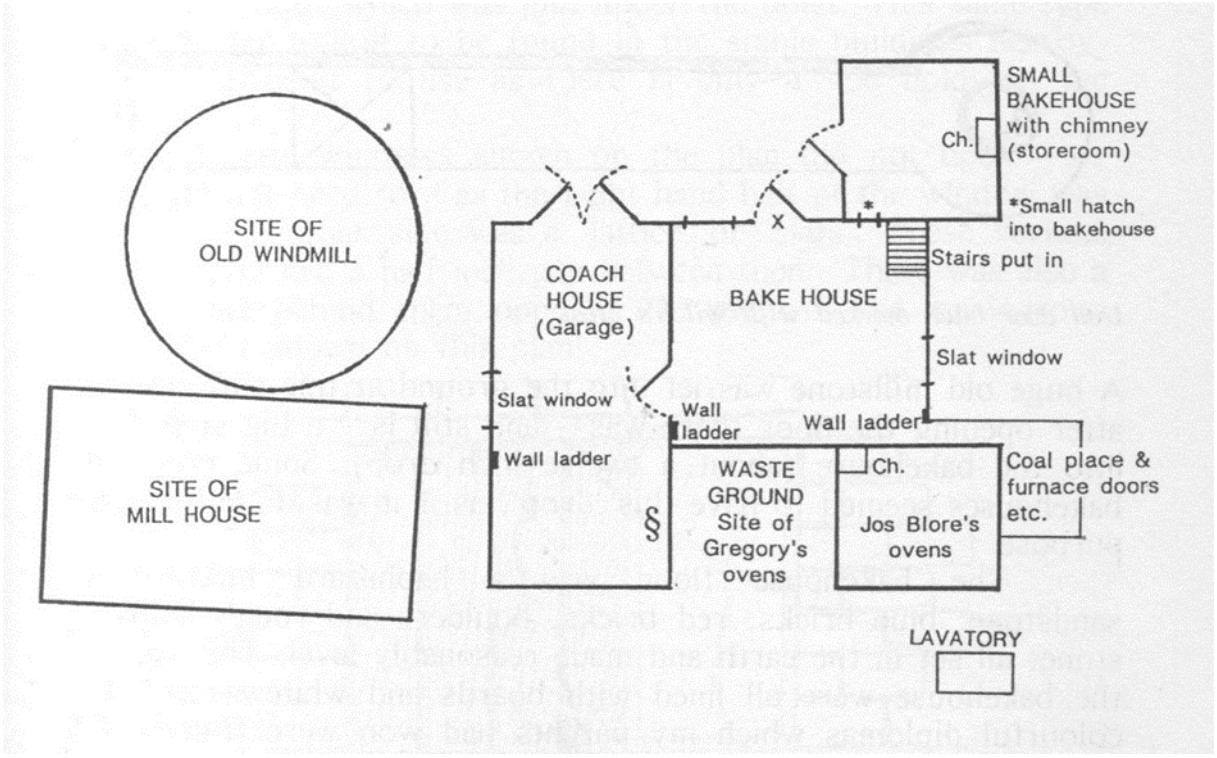
Staffordshire Advertiser - Saturday 10 September 1938

Image © Successor rightsholder unknown.

Confectioner's Success. — Mr. J. J. Walker, Fairfield Road, has been awarded a silver medal and diploma in open competition at the International Bakers' and Confectioners' Exhibition in London, for a decorated Christmas cake.

By kind permission of the British Newspaper Archive.

After I left school I worked on a farm at Abbots Bromley, then did a stint in Barclays Bank at Cheadle before serving in the Army in the KSLI. Those were the days of Military Service when all young males over 18 had to serve in one of His Majesty's armed forces. At the beginning of 1948 I started work for my father at the bakehouse. As his father had taught him the bakery business he now taught me. The bakehouse was still more or less as Jos had left it in 1929. I will describe the place as I knew it before its alterations.

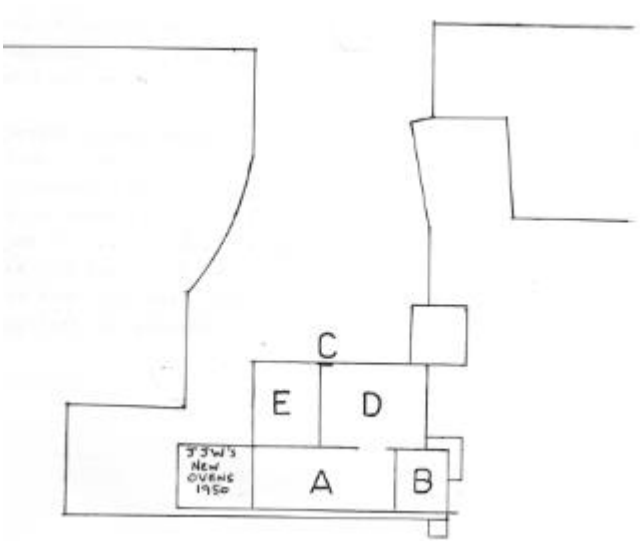


Plan of the Heath Bakehouse in 1948.

There had been a single door into the bakehouse at some early date - the brickwork of it was noticeable before the stucco work was done. An old millstone from the windmill was in the ground at the door place, the door was an old plank door which had been there since the Gregory's time with a big finger hole in it to lift a large latch on the outside of the door. There was and still is a big twelve inch step down into the bakehouse.

Jos Blore's ovens were in the room at the back marked with name on the 1948 plan above and were directly opposite the old outside lavatory. In the cast iron work

over the top oven door it said, "BENTLEY - STOKE-ON-TRENT 1903". The interiors were lit with huge gas flares kept on night and day on pilot lights. The back of the oven by the old lavatory was reinforced and insulated by a large convex bulwark of old narrow bricks - presumably from John Gregory's demolished ovens. A lot of this bulwark is still there today although we have removed the ovens completely.



Plan of layout of the Heath Bakery to help in identifying rooms in the photos that follow.

Door to Room B on plan. This photo shows the room where Jos Blore had his ovens at the back of the Heath Bakery. The brickwork here is the original glazed brickwork of Jos' side flu ovens. The entrance to the small stoke hole can be seen on the left. Coal was tipped in here ! The cast iron front doors of the oven were exactly where the door is now. We had the ovens removed when we put in the Baker Perkins oven in the new bakehouse we had built. Before the advent of modern equipment the ingredients for bread were mixed by hand to make a dough in this wooden trough – pronounced as in low - shown with its lid down. The lid was dropped on loose so it could be lifted up by the rising dough and this happened regularly. When the dough was ready for use it was cut out in pieces with a knife and thrown onto the table where it was weighed off into individual loaves. Nowadays we only use the trough for storing special flours. I have hinged the lid for convenience. The inside of the trough still carries the score marks of many years from my knife. Photo John Walker 1980s.

The bake house floor was a mixture of stone, blue bricks, red bricks, slabs and boulders all set in the earth and made reasonably level. The walls were tongue and grooved boards whitewashed. The ceiling was underdrawn in wood which was as black as ink from the ovens. The peels to take the bread out of the hot oven were kept alongside the beam on a couple of wooden spars. The window by the oven was partly glass and partly slats - as was the window in the kitchen. In the original bakehouse building quite a lot of bond wood was used and here and there in a course of brickwork would be a piece of timber perhaps to save on putting in bricks.

The only other room was the kitchen or coach-house or stable – shown left on the 1948 plan. It had always been used by us as a garage for our bread van. The coach-house and all other buildings were later additions to the original bakehouse. In fact the coach-house was built on using quite a large pale brick of poor quality. This long room was whitewashed brick with a blue brick floor and open to the rafters with no ceiling. There were two iron cratches still up in the corners on the south wall from the days when horses had been kept here. The cratches would have been filled with hay for the horses to feed on.

There were no stairs even at the bakehouse. The access to the loft over the stables was the same as the access to the flour loft over the bakehouse and the loft over the coach house - perpendicular wooden ladders fastened to the wall passing through quite a small opening in the loft floors. My father had the present stairs built. As it was not possible to carry sacks of flour through these small openings - a hoist was fixed in the bakehouse roof above the door and pitching hole. Flour was raised up on to the loft or brought down from it by this hoist as it was required. Joshua Blore's son Vincent or Vin was a P.T. enthusiast and used to have a gym and boxing booth where the flour loft is now. Just as a matter of interest Vin became quite a well-known footballer in local leagues. He was

goalkeeper for Burton Town F.C. and later signed as a professional with Derby County. Previous to this he had a trial with Aston villa.

Although nothing remains of Gregory's ovens today it was almost certain they were in the area where I have written Waste Ground on the 1948 plan. This part had been pulled down and open to the sky as I first remember it - or as anyone does. There were a lot of bricks and iron ties lying about. A lot of the old narrow bricks had been used to make a curved bulwark at the rear of Jos Blore's new ovens. Where the coach-house was built onto the bakehouse I remember the wall by the old oven which was a curved narrow brick wall with iron tie rods. This convex surface went up to about five feet in height and was most obviously a curved insulating bulwark to the old oven.

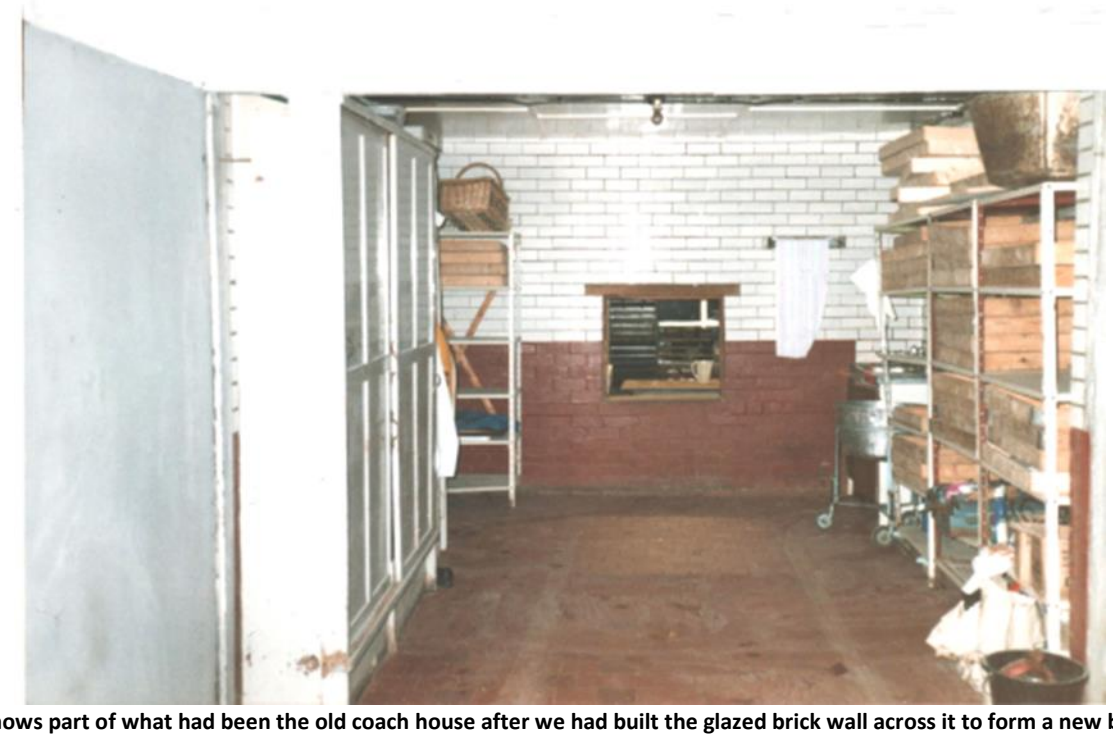
For a few years from 1950 onwards we altered the bakehouse completely. The open ground where Gregorys' ovens had been at the back of the property we had covered over and the outside wall re-built to form a room. This new room was extended by knocking down the wall into the old coach house. A wall was then built half way across the old coach house. One half became part of the new bakehouse the other half at the front being used as a storeroom. The new room was relined with white glazed bricks and red bricks halfway up. The roof timbers were of no use so the roof was re-done and covered in asbestos sheets - the walls were all rendered up and colour-washed on the exterior. My father bought some land from the Council where the old millhouse had stood and had a separate extension built on to the new room to house the Baker Perkins double decked oven. This oven had originally been installed at Messrs Elkes property at the corner of High Street and Carter Street. It had been little used by them and Baker Perkins re-built it for us. The Baker Perkins oven was coke fired.

The double decked ovens were known as side-flue ovens. They were fired in the small stoke hole - lit with paper and sticks and three shovels of coal, when burning

well the fire was levelled along the firebars and another three shovels of coal added - this would soon be very hot and another three shovels of coal making nine in all would bring the oven temperature up to bread heat 490°F. We seldom used the top oven. The fire, all the smoke and heat, went from the furnace straight into the oven and up through the chimney which was in the nearside right hand corner of the oven. After heating up, when the fire was clear and before baking could take place, another necessary operation had to be carried out. This was mopping out. When the oven door was opened - the interior was full of soot - hanging from the oven crown and all over the sole. A mop consisting of a very long peel stale with a sack fastened on the end was dipped in a bucket of water - the sack was twisted round and pushed in the oven where it was untwisted and swirled around and around continually dipping it in the water until the oven was free of hanging soot etc. Then the bread could be set in the oven! In the late 1960s we had it converted to oil firing making it so much cleaner and efficient.

Room A on Plan. The new bakehouse with the Baker Perkins ovens installed by my father in the 1950s in its own self-contained building on land where the Mill House had once stood. J J W's new ovens on plan. The steam provers are on the right. The window on the left is to the rear of the property. To the right out of sight is a hatch to the old coach house which we use as a store room.

This photo shows the opposite end to the previous photo. Previously this had been an open space which we had built up and roofed over. This was where John Gregory had his ovens and marked as Waste Ground on 1948 plan of site. The steam provers are on the left. The Baker Perkins ovens which my father had installed in the 1950s were on the opposite end of this room behind the camera. Joshua's old bakehouse was behind the brick glazed wall.



This photo shows part of what had been the old coach house after we had built the glazed brick wall across it to form a new bakehouse on the other side. The window you can see through the hatch had been part of the coach house. The Baker Perkins oven my father had installed is to the right of the window.

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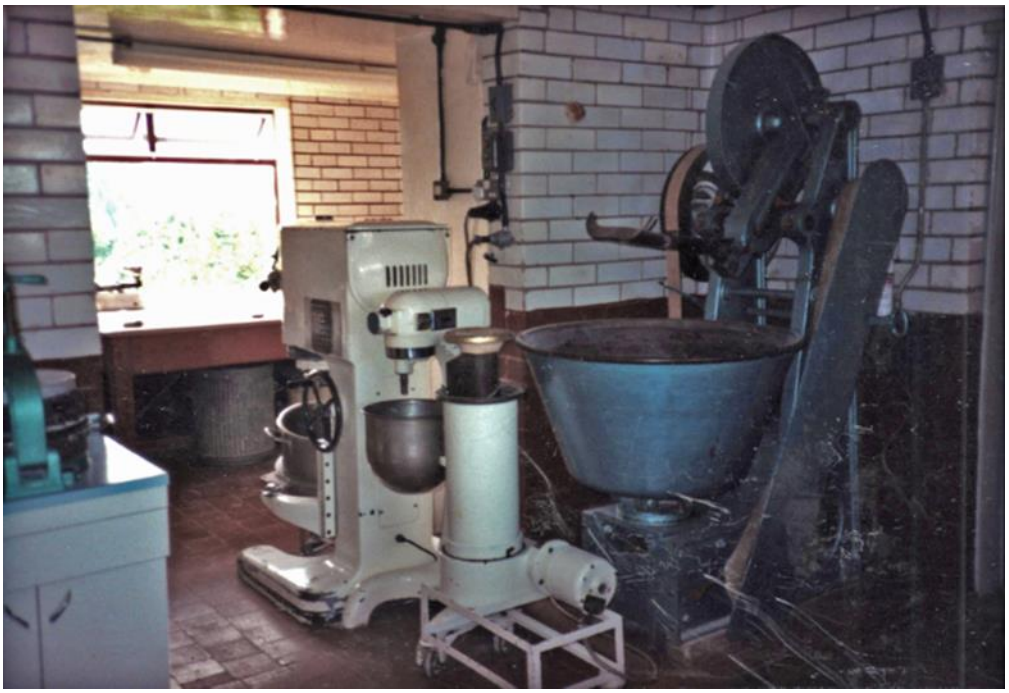
This photo shows the rear of the Heath Bakery. The new extension on the left with the tall chimney housed the Baker Perkins ovens which my father had installed in the 1950s. The extension was built partly on the site of Mill House which had been demolished many years previously. The window on the extension is the one seen on the left in the previous photo. The gable end with the two windows had been the coach house with a loft above it. The room to the right with the large window had been waste ground. My father had built a room here and extended it through the old coach house for his new bakehouse. Jos Blore's ovens had been in the room to the right of this partly hidden by old brick-built outdoor lavatory house on the right. The land at the back now part of an allotment had once belonged to the windmill. Photo John Walker.

Jos's old blue hand truck was still in the storeroom shown top right on the 1948 plan. We used it for pushing round the streets selling bread, the top lid lifted up and the basket sat on it when closed - an iron frame kept the basket from sliding off - it had two iron wheels which were very noisy when it was in use. The storeroom had a hatchway connecting it to the bakehouse - through the wall-about 18 inches square - bread was passed through and put on racks in the storeroom to cool. This was Jos's use of the small bakehouse building - as a storeroom. About 1960 Jos's ovens were taken out and that area was made into a room which we use mainly for storage.

We had tarmacadam laid down and an access path put round the back to the old lavatory - to keep the property in repair. This old lavatory which had a seat for an adult and one for a child was not as old as the rest of the property - a completely different brick yet again.



Room D on Plan. The mixing room. This was the site of the original bakehouse - just one room with a loft above. A ladder which was kept in the corner behind the bread mixer was the only way of getting to the loft where the flour was stored. On the 1948 plan it is marked Bakehouse. My father had a stairs put in in the 1950s. A door on the right lead into the old coachhouse.

Bread was mixed at 9 o'clock at night and put to rise overnight in the trough. Next morning when we started work we knocked it back and it was soon ready for weighing off. We started work about 5.25 a.m. and worked until about 5.30 at night then we had some tea and worked until about 9.45 p.m. My Dad always said, "Liking work was not enough in our job - you had to love it."

The small building which we call the storeroom was a bakehouse in its own right with an oven and a big chimney. Old Dick Hodgkinson who lived at the end house of Windmill Row - at the top of our yard - said that at one time two brothers kept the two bakehouses and neither one spoke to the other. He did not remember them but was quite adamant about the truth of the story. We had the chimney taken down about 1950 during renovations when my father had the place re-roofed in asbestos sheet and the walls rendered and coloured. Previous to this all the property was brick and blue tiles.

When my father started at the Heath Bakery he was under no illusions about what he was taking on and the competition that he faced. Uttoxeter a small town at the turn

of the century - had about eleven bakehouses. As a matter of interest I will list them - I remember the first nine in the list. In previous centuries a lot of bread and pies were baked for people during the week, but with the advent of home ovens in Victorian times only Sundays remained for the bakehouse to be used in this manner. Even this tradition finished with the outbreak of the war in 1939.

Uttoxeter Bakeries at the time my father took over the Heath Bakery in 1929.0

Parkers, Carter Street - was the Old Pantry now a sports shop.
Elkes on the corner of Carter Street and High Street now Currys.
Co-op Carter Street
Applebys, Stone Road - a small but very strong brick and stone building now British Telecom depot.
Heath Bakery, Heath Road. Ours is the only surviving bakery.
Jim Beeston, Carter Street - was Emil's Hair Salon - now a wedding hire shop. Beestons had the shop downstairs and all the bakehouse and flour lofts etc. were upstairs.
Turveys, High Street - opposite Smithfield Road junction - later Hulme's fish shop - now Kayjays electrics.
Baileys, Church Street - Market Place Corner – now Halcrows Chemist quite a big business.
Marsh & - gone but it would have been where the Sandham Electricty Office is now.
Howkins, Market Street now Gammage's bike shop.

Bread was delivered out to country districts by horse-drawn or more recently motor van. Locally bread was delivered by truck. A youth with a large basket and a truck full of bread which he pushed along the road.

Parker's bakehouse had no shop and they had an old basket-work truck - with one of the side wheels cutting into the wickerwork. Herbert Fearn, or 'Pip' as we called him pushed this. He was always covered in flour from his cap to his boots!! The Co-op had rather narrow red trucks with a cambered top - I think these had a few runners inside to hold some trays of cakes or buns.

Even the small villages hereabouts had their own bakehouse and baker. I remember Mr Fradgley the last baker at Bramshall. Whilst most homes had facilities for baking

in the early years of this century - oven and boiler ranges mainly, and gas cookers in the newer houses - traditionally the Sunday joint was taken along to the nearest bakehouse. There was also a town or communal oven - this was sited at the rear of the Old Talbot in the Market Place.

This roasting of the Sunday meat began at 9.30 to 10 a.m. each Sunday and the fee of 2d or 3d would be paid when the meat, in its tin, was left on the bakehouse table. A lot of joints were surrounded by a batter pudding mixture of various shades of yellow. Of course sometimes a tin of meat would be dropped on its way to the bakehouse, or the batter spilt out of others! This was all rectified by the baker who would skim a bit of batter out of the other tins to make up for any deficiencies. Most joints were of beef, mutton or pork sometimes game or rabbit. Some of the bigger families would have a piece of meat in one end of the tin and a rabbit in the other end. The baker took them all. The meat would generally be done between 12 and 1 o'clock - when it would be collected by its owner on their return from church or chapel. Even the small villages hereabouts had their own bakehouse and baker.

At Rocester there were three bakehouses. As already stated my grandfather John James Walker worked in one - for Andrew Dwyer and later for his son Tom Dwyer. The baker at Denstone was Jesse Jackson - an old man who had fought in the Boer War in South Africa in 1899. His father was a baker at Denstone before him. Jesse Jackson finished baking about 1949. One day he had all his doughs mixed and bread in tins ready for baking when he was taken ill and died. Obviously everything became such a mess with all the unattended doughs. Arthur Carter who baked at Denstone College dug a big hole in the field behind the bakehouse and buried it all.

Yes, we all knew each other well and there was no acrimonious rivalry between us at all. Most of these small bakehouses had a shop of some sort attached to them - others like ours on The Heath had no shop. Without a shop the only means we had of selling the bread and other goods we baked, was by hawking it from door to door and at the stall on the Wednesday market. During the course of many years hawking from house to house, one soon met and knew the regular callers - such as milkmen - postmen -

other bread deliverymen and butcher's boys. We also became acquainted with the less regular hawkers - such as peddlers, gypsies and tramps on their travels around the countryside.

Harry Mould was at Kingstone —and at Doveridge, Teddy Bates. Teddy was an old man in his eighties when I started baking in the late 1940's. Even then he started work at 4 a.m. and did more work than many people in their twenties. He was a small hawk-eyed old man with a Lord Robert's moustache. His early life had been hard and he said little about it. He did tell me that as a boy in the 1870's he was bound apprentice to Bakewells at Sudbury. The premises are still more or less the same today, with unusual stone steps up to the shop door. He said that when the day's work was finished he was locked in the bakehouse and slept on bags. His supper was pushed in to him through iron bars!

In 1964 I took over the business from my father, although I have been working at the Heath Bakery since 1948. I finished work here in November 1990.

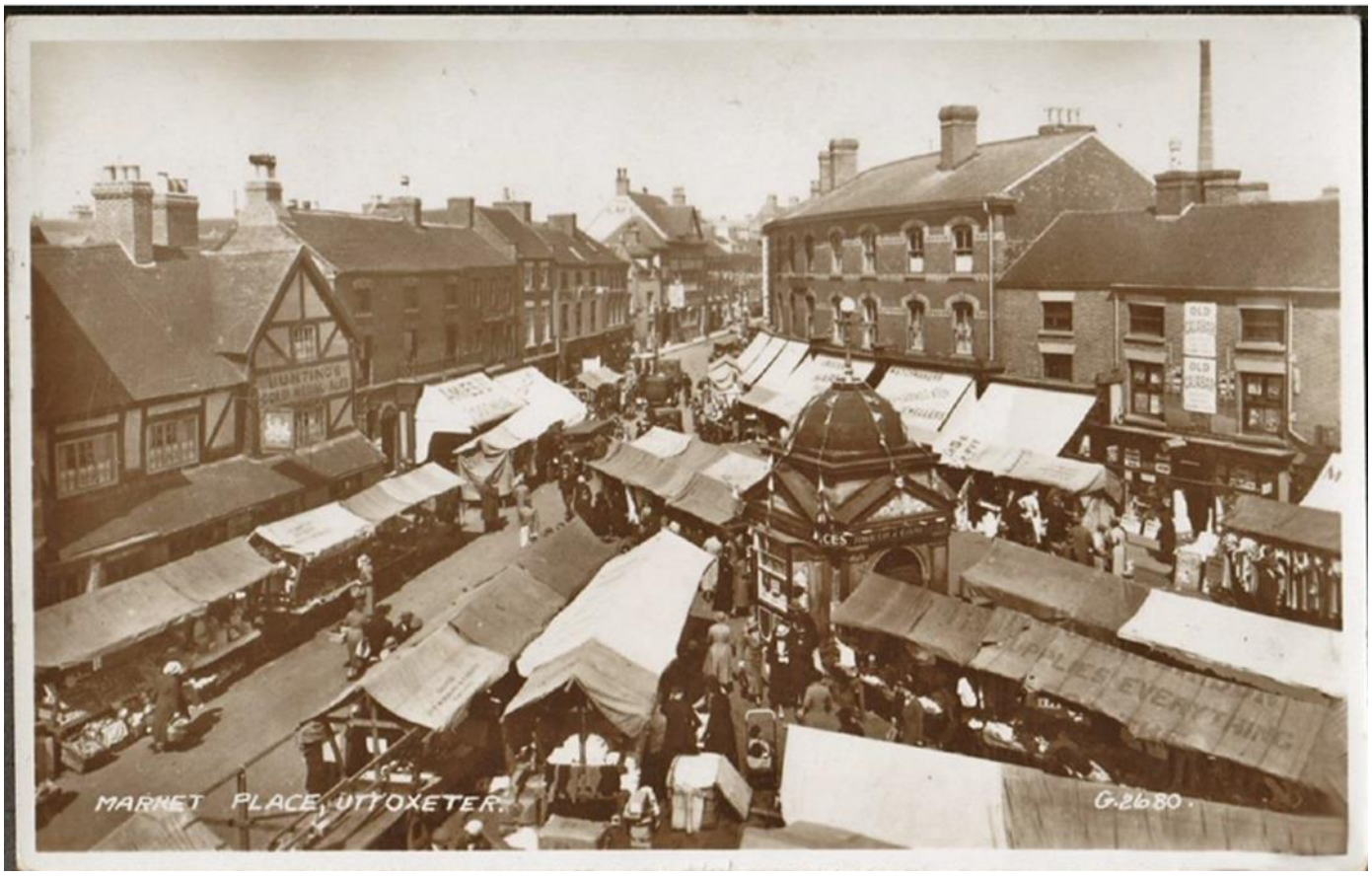
Here I am John James Walker at the bakery in 1985 using a peel to remove bread from the oven. These are 2lb loaves as we call them – they are in fact 1lb 12oz. 4 oz. were taken off them in the war years in the 1940s. We still made 4lb. loaves – actually 3lb. 8oz. until about 1958. These loaves were known as Quarterns and are no longer made anywhere else as far as I know.

SELLING OUR BREAD

There was no shop at the Heath Bakery so we have to go out and sell our produce. We had three outlets for selling our bread and cakes namely the weekly Wednesday Market in Market Place, our grocers' shops and our daily bread rounds.

The Wednesday Market

On Wednesdays we sold our bread and cakes from a stall in Market Place.



The weekly Wednesday Market in Market Place. You can see my father standing with his hands on his hips, back to the road just to the right of the stone kiosk in the middle of the Market Place. The stall was right outside Ernest Mellor's Chemist shop. Where the three storey building is to the left of our stall many years previously Dwyers had a stall where my grandfather sold his bread and confectionery from their bakery in Rocester. The Walker family must have stood on that side of the market for well over fifty years. When the market was reorganised our stall was outside the Westminster Bank.

Our bread stall was exactly opposite Westminster Bank on what would normally have been the centre of the road. We always stood in the same spot. The stalls were put up at 6 a.m. The council men put the stalls up to a plan. Rushtons' fruit & veg stall was next to us. They were the longest serving stall holders at the market and we were next. The stall on the other side was run by a butcher from Abbots Bromley and almost

a yard square to the road was blackened with fat and grease dropping on to the road and getting trodden in. The busiest time at the stall in Uttoxeter Market was always been from 10 to 12 in the morning. I used to go at 7.30 a.m. and finish at 2.30 p.m. I stood in Uttoxeter Market for 30 years. My father had stood there before me and his father had stood a bit further to the left when he worked as a baker for Andrew Dwyer years before that. When I first went there in the late forties the beautiful silver coinage of Queen Victoria was still commonplace and silver 3d pieces were in use. We called them threpnybits some people called then Joeys. I had my fair share of eyebrow raising incidents. You can imagine my amazement when an old lady came to the stall one day and started lifting up her clothes but she was after her purse which she always kept in her knickers. I soon got used to it all. We sold all the range of bread and cakes which we made but we also sold pork pies and brown sausages uncooked. My dad had been a pork butcher before getting the bakery and so was able to add these to the range of food we sold. We also sold oatcakes and pikelets and we had quite a range. We took orders there for wedding and birthday cakes.

The Bread Round

When my father first started at the Heath Bakery in 1929 it was Jos Blore's son Vincent who showed him the Stramshall Bread Round which had been their best round and it also became our best round. We ran our Bread Round like clockwork and people could tell what day it was and often what time it was by our appearance at their door or gate. The delivery rounds would more or less take a whole day from 9 a.m. to 5 or 6 p.m. Town or truck work would be done in the morning while the van was out on country deliveries. Four adults or three adults and a young person have always been necessary to run the business properly. I was initiated into delivering bread whilst still at school. My dad fixed me up with a red notebook and pencil - this had a list of customers in it - they were all within a reasonable walking distance of the bakehouse. I would fill my basket with bread and set off, returning to refill it as necessary. This was my Saturday morning job. My pocket money was given to me on a Saturday. I had a halfpenny a week for some years - then my Dad increased it to a penny - but then some weeks he forgot to give it to me. I was called either Jack or John. It didn't help that I shared

my name John James Walker with my father and later on with my son. Older customers tended to call me Jack, as they had known my father and grandfather who were both called Jack.

We used a heavy wooden hand-truck to deliver our bread round the town. It had been Jos Blore's and would hold about forty 2lb loaves. It was always a problem to pack the warm bread so that it did not crush. An even bigger problem was the steam which condensed on the cold sides of trucks and vans and ran down like a river -soaking the bread and completely spoiling it. We used to line the truck with empty flour bags - these were really thick and were returnable with money charged on them.

After this we had a truck called Ivy, best described as a truck propelled by half a bicycle. The name Ivy was painted on its frame. This was a really smart turnout and I have never seen one before or since. It had an opening lid and a door in the front which was opened and closed with a carriage key. She would hold about thirty five 2lb loaves - although in actual use we should carry less as we had to have small loaves and Hovis bread etc. Ivy could move along quite fast on a level road - but like the lady that she was - she had a hidden vice. To make a left or right turn, it had to be done very, very slowly indeed or otherwise Ivy jack-knifed immediately. The weighty truck part would turn at right angles and go down onto the ground - the rider would be thrown off at once and also land on the road. Even now the operation was not yet complete as Ivy had developed this into a fine art - the truck lid would fly open even the front door would be sprained open and all the bread disgorged on to the road. Her favourite spots for this performance were the junctions of Manor Road and High Street and Holly Road and Ashbourne Road - both having gradients to assist in the operation.

The first motor van we had was a 1927 Austin which had originally been a car. We had the coach-built body put on it by Hovis at Macclesfield and the lettering in gold leaf. We nicknamed her Big Emma.

A young John Walker with his bread van

Monday	Spath, Denstone, Stubwood, Beamhurst, Stramshall
Tuesday	Town and Bramshall
Wednesday	Stall Market Place
Thursday	Town, Spath, Denstone, Beamhurst and Stramshall
Friday	Rocester in morning Marston and Bramshall in the afternoon.
Saturday	Town, Spath, Stramshall and Beamhurst.

The 1950s and early 60s saw an end to large scale delivery of bread and hawking from door to door. This period also saw the end of the majority of small bakehouses. Delivering was now no longer a viable proposition due to such items as increased wages, vehicle maintenance, dearer petrol etc. Also the now more affluent society ate a lot less bread and had more of the 'new' sliced bread from the large national bread manufacturers. We finally stopped delivering bread in 1963. During our 60 years at the Heath Bakery none of our customers was ever left without bread.

Our Shops

In 1951 my father bought the shop at the corner of New Street and Smithfield Road which had previously been owned by Chadwicks and as a result he was able to cut our bread rounds in half.

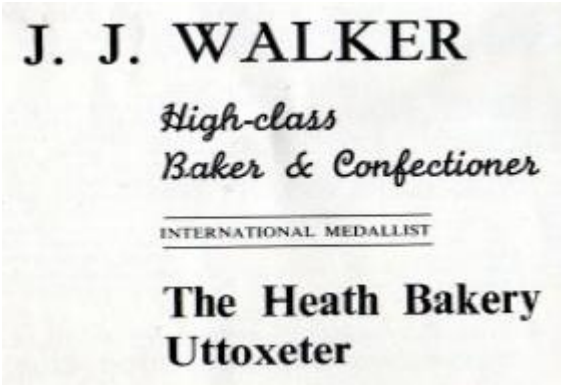
Our grocery shop at 111 Smithfield Road which we bought in 1951 and closed in 1978. Chadwicks had owned it before us.

Then in 1963 we bought the shop at 14 Cheadle Road when we finally finished delivering bread - except for customers who had it with a grocery order. This of course made it a profitable transaction. Although my father retired in 1965 at the same age as the year, he kept on working and helping to run New Street shop. He was still there in 1973 when one day he was taken ill at work and died the next day of an aneurism of the heart. My mother had died ten months earlier. She had been ill for a long time and my father looked after her and in her last years he did everything for her. They had both been born in Rocester in the year 1900 and had known each other from childhood. My mother's maiden name was Forrester and it was also the maiden name of my father's mother but they were not related. My grandmother died in 1978.

Our grocery shop at 14 Cheadle Road which we bought in 1963. The shop which had been empty for some years was sold in 2018. My father John James Walker was working here the day before he died March 23 1973.

My father aged 68 in 1968 at our house Lynfield, Fairfield Road, Uttoxeter with his mother Elizabeth on her 90th birthday.

My youngest son Paul came to work with me at the bakery about this time. He had been working at Fryer's Garage. A few years later in 1977 my eldest son John who had been employed in the construction business started at the bakehouse. I was divorced in 1978 and as part of the divorce settlement I turned all the business and property over my ex-wife. She remarried and they lived in the flat over the New Street shop. I went to live with the Torrs at the Garden Cottage, Crakemarsh Hall and cycled to work every day. During this time we made the business boom. Paul left the bakery some years ago to work as a representative for a ready-mixed concrete firm. Just as I was about to retire and hand the business over to my son John I had a visitor who brought me some information about the old windmill.



MY SEARCH FOR A PHOTO OF THE HEATH WINDMILL

Photo of the Heath Windmill taken from the western end of Windmill Row and probably taken about 1900. It was known as a tower mill and only the cap at the top moved. The arms or sails were attached to the cap and moved to face the wind. It was obviously not a working windmill as three of the arms have no slats. The slats would have been covered in canvas to catch the wind and it must have required a lot of effort to put the canvas on the four arms and take it off during a storm. I am not certain what purpose the wheel on the opposite side of the windmill served. It might have a chain or rope attached to it to haul things up or it might have been used to turn the cap so that the sails faced the wind. The Mill House is on the right. The small building on the left with the pitched roof housed the lavatories for the residents of nearby Windmill Row. The Bakehouse is obscured except for a slight ridge in the angle between the lavatory roof and the side of the windmill.

Photo courtesy Keith Pountain and the unknown old man in Ashbourne.

For well over forty years I had been trying to unearth a picture of the Heath Windmill even searching in the Record Offices in London. I must say that in the last few years I had given up hope of ever finding one. A few weeks before I finished – on a Saturday morning in the summer of 1990 – doing the usual cleaning down – I went outside to empty a mop bucket. I noticed a car drive slowly past – the driver and passenger both looking down the bakehouse yard. As I went back inside the car returned and two men got out and walked down to the bakehouse. I recognized one of the men as Keith Pountain a friend of mine, the youngest of Tom Pountain's four sons. The other man I didn't know. After the usual greetings Keith asked if there was a Windmill Lane in the vicinity. I replied "No, but there was a windmill here." I showed him exactly where it

had stood. Keith quite casually told me that he had been looking at a photo of it the other day in Ashbourne. I was amazed. I wanted to know all the details not really believing it could be our windmill. Apparently he had been talking to some old fellow who had worked at Woodkisses shop in Ashbourne and he was showing Keith some old photos. He riffled past one of a windmill and Keith said, "What's that windmill?" The old fellow said, "Oh. That's nothing to do with Ashbourne. It's a windmill that was at Uttoxeter." When I told Keith of our fruitless search over the years for a photo of the windmill he said to me, "I gr'and see him and get a copy of it. Would you like one?" With that he left saying, "Give me a couple of weeks." I still doubted that it was our windmill but sure enough in the third week Keith turned up with it and I was able to identify it immediately by the lavatory block for the Windmill Row Cottages which were demolished around 1960. What a stroke of luck after all those fruitless years of searching and just before I was about to retire. How fortunate that Keith had been with the old man in Ashbourne that day, that he had been shown the old photos and showed interest in the windmill photo. Fate or what?

It took me such a long time to find that one photo of the Heath Windmill that I decided I needed to find out if there were any artefacts still around and if there was anyone still living who could remember it. My lifelong friend retired Alleyne's Grammar School teacher the late W. G. Torrance who when he was a boy lived on The Heath in a small cottage like a gate lodge to a big house called New Field Hall which later was renamed Weaver Lodge and much later became a pub by that name. He was of course a historian of Uttoxeter - being the author of the series of ten booklets called Following Francis Redfern, the History of Alleyne's. Mr Torrance told me he remembered old John Gregory well but the windmill was not working when he - Mr. Torrance - was a boy in the late 1860s and it had not been working for many years as the sails were rotten. He said the sails were stopped in the shape of a cross and although the upright poles still had slats on them the poles at right angles were only bare poles.

One day Mr Torrance stopped at my stall in the Market Place and told me the following interesting story. Old Gregory's son Risdon Gregory was in the Navy. In 1897 the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee the young sailor was at home on leave for the celebrations and in order to mark the occasion he climbed the vertical sails on the windmill and tied a Union Jack on the very top. Mr. Torrance said "I don't know how he dared to go up such a height as those old slats were really rotten."

In one of his booklets Mr Torrance wrote that "the late W H Lovatt was responsible for many years for carrying the Mail to Stafford nightly at 8 p.m. with the return journey to Uttoxeter being made in the early hours of the following morning. It is worth recording that those nightly journeys were made safely for many years, the driver being armed with a strong cudgel, and accompanied by a guard dog. Some older residents may recall that the basement of the old Windmill on the Heath was where Mr Lovatt stabled his horses."

Mr Torrance had another connection with the mill. His mother made her own bread - this was made once a week and Mr Torrance - as a boy - wheeled it down to the bakehouse for John Gregory to bake. Each loaf was marked with a letter 'T' done with a properly made tin dock. Other people also took bread to be baked - this bread was collected later in the day - Mr Torrance saying that he was always on the lookout for a piece of loose crust or a piece that could be made loose.

Some time ago I was talking to Jim Myatt, a First World War veteran - Jim can't read or write but he has an exceptional memory for people, places and names etc. Jim was brought up as a youngster by his grandparents at Heath Cross and he said that his grandfather remembered the windmill working. His grandfather said that one day a man called to see the miller and tethered his donkey to one of the mill sails - when the fellow came out a gust of wind had taken the tethered donkey up into the air!! I doubted the truth of this - but old Jim was insistent - "My grandad would never tell a lie." Of course, the sails on a tower mill such as this, come quite close to the ground and do indeed cause a hazard. I realised old Jim's story could have been true.

Dick Hodgkinson, to whom I referred earlier, said that when the sails of the Windmill were going round - they just missed the corner of the lavatories - meaning the lavatory block belonging to Windmill Row that can be seen to the left of the windmill in the photograph. Several older people told me that when they were children they played up and down the stairs at the old windmill and played Hide and Seek there.

Mrs Alf Timmins who is living near the Laundry is probably the only person alive who can remember Old John Gregory. She describes the windmill as being a huge tower of bricks - millions of bricks!! a very apt description, when you look at the picture of the old windmill. She remembers going to the Mill House for tea quite often when she was a little girl. Mrs. Timmins is now in her nineties and old Gregory died in 1895 at the age of 70. There is a stone up to him in the cemetery.

Mrs Elsie Timmins, nee Nash who was born on The Heath in 1893. She remembers the Gregorys at the Mill House and going for tea there as a child. She knew the daughters Daisy and Dolly. Photo June 1986.

The Middleton family lived in a big house about 100 yards from the windmill which they could see from their house. Jack Middleton, who when I knew him was living in nearby Byrds Lane, told me he had only known the windmill as a disused wreck and it had been demolished in two stages. About 1905 the cap and sails were removed and also the top three stories of the mill. The ground floor and first floor were roofed over with corrugated iron sheets with the cap and sails propped up against the bottom part of the windmill.

The lower portion of the mill with its doors and housing had been used by Jos Bloor to keep his carts and horse drawn bread vans inside. This stood for another twenty years and in 1920 it was purchased by William Austin - a Shropshire man who came to be manager of Walker's Timber Yard in Carter Street. He purchased it just for the bricks which he wanted to use in the building of a new house in nearby Holly Road but first he had to get a court order to evict the sitting occupant John Mellor who was living in the lower portion of what remained of the old windmill. William Austin built his house with the bricks from the old windmill and called it Beechcroft. The gate posts for the house were made from the mill timbers. Lynne and David Brown, the present owners of Beechcroft have shown me a lot of the very old narrow bricks - removed in alterations. They also said they had donated a surviving piece of the gate posts to the Heritage Centre in Carter Street. Otherwise - to my knowledge - all that survives of this huge mill, which was 27 feet in diameter at ground level, is a large millstone which is just under the concrete yard by the bakehouse door. I'm curious to find out what became of the old mill machinery. The huge foundations of the windmill must still be there. Perhaps in years to come more information on what was once a thriving windmill on The Heath, Uttoxeter will come to light.

The Mill House where the miller and his family lived was demolished about 1938 and today only the bakehouse and the stables are still in existence. The stables are now used by gardeners on the adjacent allotments.

Owners and Occupiers of the Heath Windmill

Described in 1808 as being newly erected but may have been older.
Francis Osborn 1808-1814
William Harrison 1814-1825
Thomas Gerrard 1825-1861 who leased it to
WILLIAM SAXELBY circa 1834 – 1857
John Gregory and sons 1861-1903. John Gregory was the last miller at the Heath Windmill.

Owners and Occupiers of the Heath Bakery

Joshua Blore 1904-1929
JOSHUA BLORE BAKER & GROCER
THE GOLD MEDAL BAKERY
John James Walker father and son 1929 - 2012
THE WALKERS AT THE HEATH BAKERY
https://www.greensmill.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/guide-to-greens-mill.pdf
https://tringhistory.tringlocalhistorymuseum.org.uk/Windmills/c_chapter_03.htm

POSTSCRIPT AFTER MY RETIREMENT

When I retired in November 1990 my eldest son John carried on the business at the Heath Bakery. My younger son Paul had already moved away from the baking business and was working in the construction business. I was living with the Torrs at The Garden Cottage Crakemarsh and while I was there I managed to write a history of Crakemarsh Hall and found the time to restore the old ice house there. The history of the Hall can be read online. In 1996 I had my memories of working at the Heath Bakehouse published. It was called Hawkers Galore Memories of a Uttoxeter Baker and was quite successful. In 1997 I obtained what could be called a 'grace and favour' cottage, one of a small group of cottages designed for independent living for the elderly in the complex called The Hermitage Gardens in Holly Road and a stone's throw from the Heath Bakery.

Unfortunately my son John had a lot of leg trouble – as bakers do standing such long hours. In the early 2000s he had to have surgery on his legs. After several operation he tried to go back to work but eventually he could no longer manage to do his job at the bakehouse and the Heath Bakehouse finally closed around 2012. My son John now does HGV work which takes him all over the country and now spends most of his work time sitting rather than standing. After lying unused for a number of years The Wharf or Cheadle Road baker and grocer's shop was finally sold in 2019 to one of the Salt family from Checkley.

Apart from the people I have already mentioned - I would also like to thank Gerald Blore and his late sister Lilian for their interest, help and information. Jos Blore's son Gerald is now 81 and when I was talking to him a few months ago at his bungalow on the Cockstubbles - looking across towards the bakehouse and his old home he said, "Hey John - my Dad would have loved to have seen that Union Jack flying over the bakehouse - he was great Loyalist and Patriot." At the end of this history there is a list of references to the Heath Windmill at Staffordshire County Record Office and a copy of the deeds for the windmill mentioned above. Specials thanks to the staff

of the County Record Office, the William Salt Library and to the online British Newspaper Archive.

SOME MEMORIES OF OUR CUSTOMERS ON THE BREADROUNDS

I have called at hundreds of house and farms with my bread and each and every one has left its own imprint on my memory; perhaps a quaint expression or anecdote, an amusing occurrence or someone's life of dedication; but above all the kindness and generosity of these kind people. These were all good close-knit rounds - calling on nearly every house and farm. Some farms would have twelve loaves - three times a week. We knew all these people so well and they were not only customers, but friends. We knew their parents and grandparents - their children and grandchildren - even some of their birthdays! Likewise we shared in their joys and their sorrows. One rule was paramount - anything said at one house was never repeated at another house. Of the hundreds of houses and farms where I called each and every one has left its own imprint on my mind and memory. Perhaps a quaint expression or anecdote, an amusing occurrence or someone's life of dedication - but above all the kindness and generosity of these grand people. I feel bound to record a few recollections here and now - although I could write a book full of them.

When I started I found the customers on my list to be hard unyielding people - they didn't give a damn for bakers' boys or anyone else. There was Mrs Motteram in the little pebble-dashed cottage on Cheadle Road. She wore a huge shawl and had her ginger hair in long plaits down her back. She fixed you with deep brown eyes the moment you entered her living room - like a stoat transfixes a rabbit with its stare before the kill. Mrs Motteram would say how many loaves she wanted and then fired - "How much do I owe you John?" I would get my pencil and red book into operation - not being very good at arithmetic - then I would deliver the result. "Oh no I don't," would be the reply as she reached to the mantelpiece for pen and paper. Then in large

black figures she would do the offending sum correctly, saying, "That's what I owe you - I shan't rob you or pay you more than I need to"!

Mrs Wheeler was the wife of the Uttoxeter Postmaster and lived in Holly Road. My father said, "Make sure everyone pays up - or they can't have any more bread". I didn't know Mrs Wheeler paid every so often, by cheque. One Saturday I left a note under her door with the amount owing. Mrs Wheeler asked my father what was going on and said she would get her bread elsewhere - I ended up getting a roasting for that. I seemed to have some real sticklers!

I very soon realised in fact what grand people all my customers were. Mrs Motteram to whom I have just referred was always most kind, friendly and hospitable. It took some years before I realised why and how my Dad had compiled that list of customers for me when I was at school. These were all people who were straight and good - who stood no messing about - thus upholding one of my Dad's favourite axims - "The people who stand up to you - are in the end - the only people who will always stand by you".

In the forties and fifties - delivering by motor van had its problems. These vehicles - their engines and batteries etc. -were not as reliable as they are today. Punctures were more prevalent and mechanical breakdowns were more frequent. Winter conditions were more extreme - but in this mainly low lying area floods were a constant problem - these occurring in summer as well as in winter. This problem has to a great extent disappeared with the mechanised digging out and clearing of ditches, brooks and rivers.

Some of the worst places for flooding were - Waterloo, Beamhurst where I often had to walk along the wall top to deliver bread to the farm, Stramshall Mill - very tricky here, as it was not only deep but had a strong current also, which at times would move the van. Spath cross roads was very bad, also Bailey's Corner at Spath, Clowe's Straight, Crakemarsh and Churnet Bridge Cross Roads at Rocester. At times here it came up to my front door step in Station Road. Aldersbrook, Stubwood, The Wharf Uttoxeter and Whyte's Lane at Denstone but this could be avoided by making a

detour. My father used to say, "Going round with bread in the pouring rain - knocking on doors for 'no thank you - not today' if this won't break your heart then nothing will".

Country people would ask me to take their accumulators or 'wet batteries' to the garage to be charged up for their wireless sets. This was always with the admonition "Now don't you go and tip it over or spill it". The trust which people had in one another was something to be admired. I would meet people walking into town from outlying districts and they would say, for example, "The door's open John - my purse is on the mantelpiece - if there's not enough change there's a ten shilling note under the candlestick". Sometimes I would give change in a house and leave my wallet on a piece of furniture - it wouldn't be long before a customer would spot it and come running after me. Many would let me decide how much bread they would need until my next call, after saying, "Have a look what bread I've got left in the dairy John".

People who like myself went from door to door, also had an unwritten responsibility for the welfare of our customers. To give you an insight into this - I remember calling on Miss Avery who lived in a small cottage across a field in Stubwood. I called every Monday and Friday. One Friday I went across and she said, "Do you know Mr. Walker, you're the first person I've seen since you were here on Monday". She always said, "Two hours sleep before midnight is worth any amount after". She would sometimes give me a small medicine bottle full of whisky to take to her brother Alf at Stramshall. He had Parkinson's Disease. She would say to me confidentially, "Don't you let his wife know about it."

This brings to mind the farm labourer at Crakemarsh. He and his wife lived in the farm cottage and she worked in the farmhouse. I called at both places. Dick was very fond of cigarettes and would get me to bring some each journey - but his wife wasn't to know! He would leave the money behind a field gate post, where I would leave his cigarettes. Not quite such an easy operation as might be imagined - as the gate post was in partial view of the farmhouse and the cottage!! Every Thursday I had to leave an empty bottle at Mrs. Bailey's at Beamhurst. Then when I called on Saturday night

she would give the bottle back to me - full of cream - off the top of the churn - what a gift in those struggling times. Mrs. Bailey lost her youngest daughter at the age of two with Infantile Paralysis a scourge of the fifties - when several of my customers lost children with this disease. Mr. Birch lived at Denstone, his single daughter Jessie kept house for him. He was in his nineties. I called one day and Jessie was out. The old man said, "Jessie's gun ite - dun yer know what fert lave John?" I put the bread on the table and Mr. Birch said, "What dun way owe thee?" I said, "Oh Jessie will pay me on Monday". "Nay lad ah'll pee thee nah". So I told him and he paid me and said, "Dun y know what my owd Dad used fert see?" - "The shortest reckonings make the longest friends." How true.

Mr. & Mrs. Prince had retired from farming at Crakemarsh and lived in a bungalow they had built down New Road, Uttoxeter. Mrs. Prince loved gardening and she would strike cuttings of blackcurrants - redcurrants - gooseberries etc. and when they had made nice young bushes, she would often have one waiting for my call on Saturday night. Old Mr. Prince would generally enquire, "An yer bin ter Crakemarsh today John?" I went yesterday. "Did yer say our Billy? As he dun is eemakin yet?"

Mr. & Mrs. Jones lived in the gardener's cottage at Stramshall Mill. He was gardener to William Bagshaw at the big house Springfields. Mr. Jones would give me a bundle of cabbage plants - cauliflower or Brussel sprouts etc. each in its own season. All wrapped up properly and just right for planting out.

On Saturdays I would get to Mrs. Lowes' about 1 o'clock - she kept a little place opposite the church - Church Farm. Mrs. Lowe was the very essence of happiness and good nature. She would say, "Come on John - you're a bit late - I've put your sausage and chips out - go in the dairy (pantry) and cut yourself some bread , while I pour out."

In the warmth of her kitchen there was always some farm stock being reared. Chickens - ducklings - perhaps a few piglets. I remember one year - half the kitchen was fenced with wire netting and a flock of turkey poults were kept there until they were quite big birds.

On one occasion I drew up in the road - Mrs. Lowe came out, "Is Jack there?" meaning her husband. I said, "No, he's just gone on the bus". "Oh dear - he's going to a funeral up the Potteries and I've forgotten to tell him where he's going to."

Next to Mrs. Lowes - behind the Church - is a very big house, about fifty yards of steep approach to it - here lived the two Miss Barnwells. Miss Esmie, the eldest, tall and thin and Miss Violet short and quite plump. They were the unmarried daughters of the Reverend Barnwell - Vicar of Stramshall for over fifty years. I read that he was a well-known glass plate photographer and took many photos of Uttoxeter and the surrounding area. These two old ladies lived in the past - when people bowed and curtsied to them in the street. They never accepted modern times or changes, and always called the gardener/handyman by his surname – Adams.

The postman would take their mail in a leather bag - and if they had any to post it was handed to him in a leather bag. They didn't use post boxes!! The bus would set them down at their gate and pick them up there also - they would not use public bus stops!!

I would go up the graveled gradient and then up about twenty brick steps to the back door - with a selection of bread in my basket. When they finally arrived at the door - - it was generally a joint decision - one of them might ask if I had a plum loaf - a bun loaf. This meant a journey down to the van and back - by which time they would probably have decided to have a plain sponge cake. Down and back again - generally in the pouring rain - oh well! The customer is always right and if they aren't - we let them think they are. Saturday was "pay day" here - when told the week's bill - one would have to fetch the money, having to go up two flights of stairs - it was never handy or ready - and returning with it in a paper envelope. This was tipped out onto a table in the passage and counted over twice before finally being handed over. They never used old or used £1 or 10/- notes - only new ones from the bank and they would not accept a used note in change - one had to keep a very clean note on one side, in case it was needed for their change. When they made a visit to anyone's house or to a local farm, they were always treated like Royalty. They would generally arrive around tea time.

Townend Farm, Beamhurst was kept by some old men – the Copes brothers who were unmarried. On Saturday night - this was on the last lap of the Saturday rounds - one of the old men was in the yard working with the glimmer of light from a hurricane lantern I said, "You're working late tonight Mr. Cope", he replied "Arr - I like working of a nates - you can only say one job as wants doin at a time"!!

Mr & Mrs Ted Sale kept a woodyard in London - they were bombed and burnt out during the German blitz. They returned to their native place and lived at Cherry Tree Cottage, Stubwood. Monday afternoons they always kept a plate of pudding for me - either apple or rhubarb etc. Put plenty of sugar on it - we don't use it they'd say. Sugar was a scarce commodity and still rationed until the early fifties.

I could go on seemingly forever with these anecdotes, but let me mention old Jim Motteram. He was the husband of dear old Mrs. Motteram whom I've mentioned earlier. Jim was an old soldier and there is a photograph of him with the Uttoxeter Volunteers in this book. Jim suffered an amazing catalogue of injuries in the 1914-18 war. He was wounded with rifle bullets and also by shrapnel - he was gassed and also run through by German's bayonets in several parts of his body. He said that the first man to be killed in the war from Uttoxeter was Jimmy Nuttall. Jim said that Jimmy Nuttall was standing next to him, on his left, when they were attacked by Prussian Guards. One of them cut Jimmy Nuttall straight down through the head with his sword. Jim, a kind and gentle person, was as straight as a ramrod and lived until he was nearly ninety.

Mrs Jennings at Bramshall was reared by her great aunt and great uncle. She said the roads and lanes were so rough and muddy that everyone wore pattens to go to church. These were iron hoops worn under the shoes and tied on to them. This lifted the wearers up out of the mud - it must have been quite difficult walking in them.

I always had my sandwiches at Granny Walkers' on the Stramshall round. Some called her Nurse Walker - she had been a Midwife in this area in the early years of the century. The Co-op breadman Tim Deaville also had his break here on a different day.

When I got there Granny Walker would say, "Sit thee dine ith rockin cheer - I'll brew a cup a tay." Her husband Joe was a farm worker all his life - then when he was over 80 he did part time work at Cartwright's Chemist, unpacking etc. When Granny Walker died he went to Bramshall to live with his daughter. I often saw him on his walks and would stop and have a word with him. One day I was running late and saw old Joe - I passed him by in the van thinking he wouldn't notice me. Next time I saw him he was most concerned and said, "John dunna yow ever goo past may agen - you munna ever do that agen." So I was quite rightly put in my place.

Christmas Eve would be the last delivery before the few days holiday, so of course this was very busy. Extra bread and extra fare such as pork pies - mince pies etc. Often ending up short of bread and having to bake more at night and deliver it too. This delivering would often go on until 2 a.m. on Christmas morning. People waited up - they knew I should turn up. I would be in quite a merry state as you might guess! What a mixture. A glass of rum - coffee - tea - whisky - home-made wines - all day long. One Christmas morning I was checking through my bread book, and I hadn't entered anything for Jack and Mary Griffin of Trafalgar House, Stramshall. I had to go and ask - just to make sure I had called. They laughed and said, "You called, but we didn't think you knew much about it."

New Year's Day was not a holiday then, and I would be expected to let the New Year in for people. They would give me pieces of coal and bread - let me in at the door - have a glass of wine and a mince pie, wishing them a Happy New Year I would be shown out by a different door.

How I regret having to leave out the majority of my customers, but space forbids too much recollecting as this really started out as a brief history of the Heath Bakery. Let me just recall old Rowbottom. He lived alone in a shack at Denstone. He was a mixture of a hermit, a miser and a recluse. When he opened his door there was his camp bed on the floor - piles of newspapers - Oxo tins and jam jars he had hoarded up. He wore a worn out straw hat - no crown in it - just his bald head shining out of it. When he paid he turned away - so that I shouldn't see his purse!!!

Most people paid at the weekend for weekly bread. The method of reckoning payment was done by an archaic system which used the quartern loaf (41b) as the unit. This system of booking was used throughout Great Britain. This meant that a large loaf, as we know it today (21b) was booked as 1/2 and a small loaf as a 1/4. Thus if someone had 3 loaves a small white and a Hovis 3 times a week - it would be booked as follows (with bread at 9d a quartern and 3d a small white and 4d a Hovis as I first knew it).

Mrs. Jones Mon Thurs Sat

Total
11/2 1/41A1 1/41-1
11/2 1/4W 1/4h
11/2 kw kh 5/11/2d (26p)

To complicate things even further - bread which we sold to small shops on our rounds was always bought by the stone. There were 7 loaves to a stone - until the war years of the 1940's when 4oz was deducted from 21b loaves - thus making 8 loaves to a stone. The delivery rounds would more or less take a whole day from 9a.m. to 5 or 6 p.m Town or truck work would be done in the morning while the van was out on country deliveries. Four adults or three adults and a young person have always been necessary to run the business properly. During the heavy snow of 1940 my father borrowed a horse sledge from Stathams at The Elms Farm, Bramshall to deliver bread to outlying customers.

SOME ITINERANT TRAVELLERS AND WORKERS

About once a year I would meet old Mrs Gypsy Finney - dressed completely in black with her more colourful daughters. They sold meat tins, kettles, pans and clothes pegs etc. Jack Bannister and his "wife" were two tramps - she always walked about twenty yards behind him. Every so often they would stop and have a slanging match - raising their fists up to each other - sometimes actually fighting - before trudging on. I never knew whether this was done to arouse pity and elicit food or

gifts -or if it was real warfare! They slept the night in barns. Wintertime was spent in Mellor's barn in New Road, Uttoxeter.

Every Friday the Oatcake Man came to Rocester by train from Macclesfield with a couple of clothes baskets full of oatcakes. These were left at the station while he hawked them from door to door with a smaller basket.
"America Jack" pushed a pram full of buckets - brushes and lime -flying from the front of the pram was the Union Jack. Walkers at Denstone have a photograph of him! He was deported to Canada for sheep stealing in the early years of this century. When the Great War broke out - convicts were given a pardon if they were willing to serve in the armed forces. Jack served with the Canadian Army, with distinctions and came back to England after the war. He married a local woman and began his life of whitewashing farmers' cowsheds and barns with his pram-borne equipment!! His real name was John Salt - he came from Prestwood near Ellastone.

Joby Bloor from Uttoxeter went round with a pony and flat dray selling blocks of salt around farms. There were always one or two lurchers following under the back of the dray - ready for chasing a rabbit. Cups - saucers - plates and all manner of pottery was also taken round - generally carried in clothes baskets by two people. The knife grinder came round on his bike - when a householder wanted shears, scissors or knives sharpening - he would turn his bike upside down. The pedals would then operate the grinding wheel attachment. Another man would lug a huge bulging suitcase from door to door -full of every item of clothing one could imagine. He would knock on the door and immediately open the case on the ground - deftly exposing and arranging all its contents in case and lid - ready for the opening door! Other packmen as we called them would have a shallow wooden box about two feet square with a hinged lid. This flat case was carried on a leather strap - slung around

the neck. At the door they would slide the box round in front of them and open the lid. The lid and bottom were then like two trays - filled with every conceivable item a housewife might want. Buttons - needles -thread - laces - buckles - combs - grips - slides - brooches - an Aladdin's cave.

Mr. Surtees who lived near the bakehouse used to cycle round farms and houses taking orders for cattle and horse oils and ointments - also for boot and shoe polish which he made in a shed in his garden. The polish being in proper tins and labelled "Bootine". When he had his orders, other days would be used cycling out to deliver the goods.

Old Tom Jackson was a retired 'roadman' or 'lengthsman' and lived at Denstone. Before mechanisation, every three or four miles of road had a roadman who used to keep the ditches cleared out, the grass verges trimmed and the gutters swept out. They kept all the lanes and roads looking very nice. Tom was a native of Stanton. He was the last person I knew who spoke in the beautiful language of old England. He pronounced double 'd' as 'th' wherever it occurred - thus he would call a ladder a lather etc. This now only survives in the word fodder. Some farmers still talk of 'fother' and 'fothering' their animals. Bedrooms and bedroom windows - Tom would always say chambers and chamber windows - nice clothes were raiments and working clothes clouts!

As a youth Tom went into farm service at Stanton. He said they were "Clemmed to death," being young the farm workers were always hungry. To help them keep going he said they would crack an egg on their teeth and down the contents, also when chance arose they would blow aside the froth on a bucket of milk and have a draught of that. They seldom had meat for dinner - it was always boiled fat bacon - nothing but fat - sometimes they would have fish - and occasionally on a Sunday they would have 'flesh meat'.

They worked twelve hours every day and had two days holiday a year - Good Friday and Christmas Day, after milking. When the First World War broke out in 1914 Tom joined the Army. He said, "Our old man had ten lads - I didn't have any sisters. We all joined the Army - ten of us - and we all came back at the end of the war. Each of us was decorated - I should think there is a bit of a record there somewhere isn't there Jack?" One of his brothers - George - didn't live long after the war - he had the roof of his mouth shot away and starved to death in a barn at Ilam. The lady who kept the village stores was the last to see him - she sold him a small loaf - it was with him when he was found.

Old Tom said to me, "Ast ever sane the Military Medal Jack?" I said, "No". He said to his wife, "Fetch them medals in out of the front room Ede". His wife shuffled back with - picture frame full of medals. Sure enough there was the M.M. Tom said, "I get a bit of a pension with it you know - Tom Walker comes round with it every October - round about my birthday. It used to buy me a couple of ounces of bacca, but nowadays it only buys one ounce".

He told me of a narrow escape he had in the trenches. "I was in a slit trench - there was only room for three of us in it. On my left was an old soldier who had just come back from leave in England. He had married his mate's widow - his mate had been killed in action - and had brought some fags back with him. On my right was a young lad who had not been in the front line before. The old soldier gave me a fag - the boy didn't want one. We persuaded him to have one to steady his nerves. We all lit up -then Jerry dropped a mortar bomb - quite a distance behind us -soon after he dropped another the same distance in front of us. I knew he was ranging us, and I put my arms around the old soldier and the boy and pulled them down into the trench with me. The next thing I knew was that I was there alone - the fag still in my fingers. The old soldier lay out in No-Man's Land cut into three pieces. He was cut off at the fork of the arms and the fork of the legs. The boy was hanging in a tree with his bowels blown out and steaming in the sun. I put my hand

to my face to see if there was any blood - there wasn't a spot. All I had was a nick above the eyebrow, just as if you'd ketched it with yer thumb neel".

Later in the war Tom was taken prisoner - he was starved of food again here. He was released the year the war finished - 1918 and came out of the prison camp on Whit Sunday. Typical of the soldiers of the First World War - he had a big bushy moustache and when he had finished a cup of tea he would squeeze his moustache with his hand for the last few drops!

Tom Walker who I have mentioned kept a garage at Denstone and lived at the Tavern with his three single sisters and aged mother. She remembered the open brook running across the road by the Tavern. Tom Walker was one of the few people who served in both world wars 1914-18 and 1939-45. In this latter war he was a survivor of Dunkirk.

Heath Windmill File at Staffordshire Record Office

One box of 46 documents as follows:

1. Release from Samuel Harper to Mr John Marratt of lands in Uttoxeter, 14 Nov 1739
2. Assignment of a mortgage from Joseph Stubbs and his wife to Thomas Bradbury in trust for Mr John Marratt, 15 Nov 1739
3. Samuel Harper to Mr John Marratt lease of possession, 13 Nov 1739
4. Mr Marratt to Mr Hart bond to indemnity against Dower, 4 May 1779
5. Land tax for messuage and Malthouse and 28 acres of land in Uttoxeter in occupation of James Dudley and John Ward
6. Copy of will of Mr William Dudley, 11 Oct 1777
7. Copy of will of John Marratt of Whitechapel, Corn Factor, 1779
8. Mr Webb Marratt and his wife to Mr Thomas Hart and his trustee release of two closes of land in Uttoxeter, 4 May 1779
9. Mr Hart by direction of Mr William Dudley to Mr John Shipley assignment of Mr Marratt's bond to indemnify against Mr Marratt's dower, 30 March 1783
10. Mr Hart for Mr William Dudley, conveyance of lands in Uttoxeter, 20 March 1783
11. Mr Hart to Mr William Dudley lease to invest possession, 19 March 1783
12. Mr Dudley to Mrs Wheeldon mortgage for servicing £400, 29 Sep 1795
13. Mr James Dudley certificate of the contract for the redemption of land tax, 15 Feb 1799
14. Copy of will of Mr James Dudley will, 13 March 1807
15. Mr James Blair to Mr William Harrison lease for possession, 20 Dec 1814
16. Mr James Blair (a trustee for Sale) and Mr John Osborn to Mr William Harrison conveyance of messuage, windmill and land at the heath in the parish of Uttoxter, 21 Dec 1814
17. Mr James Machin to Mr Richard Allen conveyance of a small plot of land at Uttoxeter Heath, 29 Oct 1825
18. Mr William Harrison and his trustee to Mr Thomas Gerrard and his trustee conveyance by release of a messuage, windmill and land at the Heath in Uttoxeter, 25 Mar 1825
19. Mr Thomas Gerrard to Mr H Brushfield mortgage by devise for 500 years of messuage, windmill, land and a premises at the Heath Uttoxeter, 29 Apr 1825
20. Mr James Dudley to Thomas Hart mortgage of land in Uttoxeter, 25 June 1831
21. Release from Miss Godwins and Mr and Mrs Flint to Mr John Ward, otherwise Dudley, 22 May 1827

22. Mr Richard White (only acting executor of the late Mr Humphrey Brushfield deceased) by direction of Mr Thomas Gerrard to Mr Thomas John Mountfort assignment of mortgage by service for 500 years of messuage, windmill, land and premises at the Heath in Uttoxeter, 18 Jul 1827
23. Papers concerning payments by John and Joseph Fox to Ann Dudley of Uttoxeter (minor) re land in Uttoxeter called Heath Closes (1830s)
24. Mr Webb executor of Mrs Wheeldon to Thomas Hart esquire assignment of residue of 500 years term in land in Uttoxeter in trust for Mr John Fox, 23 Jul 1832
25. Mr James Dudley and others to Mr John Fox conveyance of lands in Uttoxeter called Heath Closes, 20 and 21 Jul 1832
26. Mr Richard Allen to Mr Thomas Rushton a trustee for Messers James Lassetter and Charles Wood conveyance of a small plot of land at Uttoxeter Heath, 20 and 21 Mar 1839
27. Mr John Morris and wife to Mr William Jonathan Fox and Mrs Ann Fox release of lands in the parish of Uttoxeter, 7 May 1839
28. Messers James Lassetter and Charles Wood to Mr William Saxelby and trustee conveyance of a small plot of land at Uttoxeter Heath, 28 Jul 1841
29. Thomas Clement Sneyd Kynnersley Esq to Mr William Saxelby conveyance of several cottages gardens and premises situate at the Heath in Uttoxeter, 11 Oct 1841
30. Mr William Saxelby to Messers Bott and Worthington Memorandum of Agreement, 22 Dec 1841 [relates to cottages at the Heath]
31. Abstract of the title of Lords Talbot, Bagot and others to three cottages and two gardens at Uttoxeter Heath, 1841 (Mr William Saxelby)
32. Mr William Saxelby and another to Mr Ralph Bagshaw conveyance of several cottages or dwellinghouses, garden and land situate at the Heath in Uttoxeter, 18 May 1859
33. Abstract of the title of the trustees under the will of the late Mr Thomas Gerrard to a Wind Corn Mill, messuages, buildings, land and hereditaments situate at the Heath in Uttoxeter, 1861
34. Statutory declaration by George Gerrard as to Thomas Gerrard (the grandson) having attained his majority, 25 March 1862
35. The trustees under the will of the late Mr Thomas Gerrard to Mr John Gregory conveyance of a Wind Corn Mill, messuage, buildings and land upon the Heath Uttoxeter, 25 Mar 1862
36. Mr John Gregory to the trustees of Uttoxeter Benefit Building Society no 2. Mortgage of a messuage, wind, cornmill and premises at Uttoxeter Heath, 1862
37. Mr Ralph Bagshaw to Mr John Gregory conveyance of several messuages, cottages, garden, land, rope walk and premises at the heath in Uttoxeter, 2 Jun 1869
38. Walter John Lyon esq to Mr John Gregory conveyance of a field of land situate on the Heath Uttoxeter, 22 Dec 1875 [tiny sketch map showing names of surrounding land owners]
39. Abstract of title of W. J. Fox esq to lands at the Heath Uttoxeter, Mr John Gregory purchaser, 1875
40. Re. William John Fox's Trust, abstract of the will and of letters of administration of Mr Fox's uncle, father and mother, 1875
41. Abstract of the title of the trustee under the will of the late John Gregory deceased to windmill, bakehouses, stables, messuage and a field of land situate at the Heath, Uttoxeter, 1895.
42. Mr John Gregory to Mr Charles Mynors mortgage of land, messuage, hereditaments and premises situate at the Heath Uttoxeter, 1 Oct 1895
43. Mr Walter Tipper the trustee under the will of John Gregory deceased to Mr John Gregory conveyance of a messuage or dwellinghouse, bakehouses, mill, stables and a close of land all situate on the Heath, Uttoxeter, 30 Sep 1895 [outline map]
44. Mr John Gregory to Miss D Gregory second mortgage of land, messuage, hereditaments and premises situate at the Heath, Uttoxeter, 1 Oct 1895
45. Mr Cyril F South to Mr Risden Gregory conveyance of a freehold wind mill, bakehouse, messuage, garden, ground, close of land and premises containing 3a and 3r situate at the Heath, Uttoxeter, 11 May 1898.

Conveyance Heath Windmill

Abstract of the Title

of

Mrs. Chandlers relating to Two Bakehouses Kitchen & Ovens & the site of the Old Coal House situate on the Heath Uttoxeter in the County of Stafford contracted to be sold to Mr Joshua Blow

25th March 1862. By Indenture of this date made between Joseph Bradbury of Dovecidge Field in the Coy of Derby Farmer & Thomas Deaville of Dovecidge in the said County Farmer & Road Surveyor (Trustees under the Will thereof named of the one part & John Gregory of Uttoxeter in the Coy of Stafford Miller of the other part

Stamp £2.-.15/-

Original produced & examined at the office of Messrs. Hawthorn Uttoxeter this 10th day of May 1905 C. H. Corbishley

Reciting Thomas Genard late of Rocester in the sd Coy of Stafford Miller being seised in fee of the hereds & premes thereinafter ment & conveyed duly made & published his last Will & Testament in writing duly exted & attested bearing date the 13th April 1850 whereby he gave & bequeathed the sd hereds by the description of All that his Windmill together with a house garden & appurts thereunto belonging cont^d by admt 1 acre or thereabts situate & being on Uttoxeter Heath then in the occupation of Wm Saxelby And as to his the Testators other property Real & personal unto the sd J. Bradbury & T. Deaville their hrs & assns upon certain trusts for the benefit of his four Grandchildren therein named & upon trust when the eldest of them should attain his age of Twenty one years that his sd Windmill should be sold & disposed of by his Trustees to the best advantage & the proceeds together with all the trust monies & funds therein mentioned & referred to be divided into four equal shares & given to his four Grandchildren Thomas John

Mary & Catherine Gerrard the sons & daughters of his Testators late son William Gerrard decd to whom he gave & bequeathed the same share & shares alike to be recd by him or her as he or she should reply attain the age of 21 years with such limitations over as to share or shares of any of them dying under the sd age as therein mentd And the sd Testator appointed the sd Jos: Bradbury & Tho: Deaville Exors of his sd Will

And recits death on 25 March 1853 of sd Testator & proof of his Will by both the Exors
Lichfield Dist Reg 9th Sept 1861

And reciting sd Testators sd Grandson Thomas Gerrard eldest son of the sd Testators sons William Gerrard attained his sd age of 21 years on the 26th July then last

And reciting the sd J. Bradbury & T. Deaville as such Trustees as aforesd had since the happening of that event duly advertised the property thereby settlement & thereby conveyed or intended so to be for sale by public Auction at the Hope & Anchor Inn at Uttoxeter aforesd on the 28th November then last at which sale the sd Jno Gregory was the Highest Bidder & declared to be the purchaser at or for the price or sum of £502.

It was witnessed that in pursuance of such sale & purchase & in consideration of sd sum of £502 of lawful British money to the sd J. Bradbury & T. Deaville as such Trustees as aforesd at or before the sealing & delivery of those presents well & truly paid by the sd Jno Gregory receipt whereof &c - They the sd J. Bradbury & T. Deaville Did & each of them Did grant release & convey unto sd Jno: Gregory & his hrs & assns

All that Messe dwelling house or tenement with the Stable piggeries drying Kiln & other out buildgs garden & appurts thereto belong situate at the Heath in the par: of Uttoxeter aforesd

2o

in the County aforsd And also all that Windmill situate near to or adjoining the sd Messe And also all wheels Mill stones, Machinery & other Fixtures & appurts to the sd Windmill belong'g or appertaining And also All that Close piece or p'cel of land / upon part whof the sd Messuage Windmill & other Bldgs have been erected sit'e at the Heath aforsd containing by estimation with the site of the sd Messe Windmill & other Bldgs & the sd Garden 2 r 35 p. or thereabts be the same more or less all wch sd premes were late in the occupation of Francis Osborne afterwards of James Finney & Wm Harrison successively then of the sd Thos Gerrard since of Wm Saxelby & now of the sd John Gregory

To gr &c

And all the Estates &c

To hold the same

To the only proper use & behoof of the sd Jno Gregory his hrs or assns for ever

Declaration against Dower

Cov't by sd J Bradbury & Thos Deaville that they had done no act to incumber

Executed by sd Jos't Bradbury & Thos Deaville & duly attested

Receipt for consideration money endorsed signed & witnessed

ecember 1895 By Indenture of this date made betwn Walter Tupper of Uttoxeter in the Coy of Stafford Stone Mason of one part & John Gregory of Uttoxeter aforsd Miller & Baker of the other part

=15/—

Reciting that John Gregory of Uttoxeter aforsd Miller & Baker now deceased by his last Will & Testament dated 13th Febry then last appointed the sd Walter

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Tipper thereby called his Trustee to be Exors & Trustee of that his Will & gave all his property of whatever kind unto his Trustee In trust to convert the same into money by sale or otherwise & to pay the proceeds as therein mentd

And reciting that sd Testator John Gregory died on the 16th day of June then last & this sd Will was duly proved by the sd Walter Tipper the sole Exor thereof in the Lichfield Dis: Registry of the Probate Div: of Her Majesty's High Court of Justice on the 22nd August then last

And reciting that sd Testator was at the time of his death seized of or entitled to (amongst other property) the hereds: thereby devised & intended to be thereby conveyed for an Estate in fee simple

And reciting agreement for sale

It was witnessed that in pursuance of sd agreement & in consn of sum of £750 as pchse money to sd W. Tipper pd by sd Jno: Gregory (party thereto) on or before the exctn of these presents (the receipt &c) the sd W. Tipper as such Trustee as aforesd thereby conveyed unto sd Jno Gregory (inter alia)

The before abstracted premes:

To hold the sd premes

unto & to the use of sd Jno Gregory in fee simple

Executed by sd Walter Tipper attested

ber 1895 By Indenture of this date made betwn the sd John Gregory of the one part & Charles Maynors of Sudbury in the Cty of Derby Gent: of the other part

sd

al/sond

stone

Witnessed that in consideration of the sum of £400 (paid &c) (receipt &c) the sd John Gregory covenanted with sd C. Maynors to pay to him on the 1st April then next the sum of £400 with int thereon in the meantime after the rate of £4 p.c.p.a. computed from the date of these presents & also so long after that day as any principal

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money remained due under those presents to pay int. half-yearly

And it was also witnd that for consn aforsd sd Ino: Gregory as Beneficial Owner thby conveyed unto sd Chas Mynors (inter alia)

The before abstracted premes:

To hold the same

unto & to the use of the sd Chas. Mynors in fee simple

Proviso for redemption

Cov.t by sd Ino Gregory that he sd Ino Gregory thby attorned Tenant to sd C. Mynors of the heres: &premes: thby conveyed at the yrly rent of £20 to be pd half-yrly

Proviso that sd C. Mynors his hrs or assns might at any time after 1st April then next enter into &upon the sd heres: &premes: or any part thof & determine the Tenancy thby created without giving to sd Ino Gregory any notice to quit

Executed by sd Ino Gregory: attested

1898 By Indenture of this date made betwn Cyril Frederick South of Uttoxeter in the Cty of Stafford Auctioneer of one part & Risdern Gregory of the same place Butler of the other part

Reciting the befe abst Indre of 1st Octr 1895

And reciting that by an Indre &bearing even date with but executed after the execution of the lastly recited Indre & made betwn sd Ino Gregory of one part & Dorothy Gregory (thn dcsd) of the other part the same heres were conveyed by sd Ino Gregory unto & to the use of sd Dorothy Gregory in fee simple subj to the lastly thereinbefe recited Indre & the principal moneys &int thby secured & subj also to the proviso in the then reciting Indre cont.d for redemption of sd heres. on paymt by sd I. Gregory to sd D. Gregory of

the sum of £250 with int: on a day then past
And reciting that by an Order of the Cty Ct of
Staffd holden at Burton on Trent dated the 15th
Octr 1894 sd Jno Gregory was adjudged a
Bankrupt & the sd C. F South was on or about
the 15th Octr 1894 duly chosen Trustee of the Estate
& effects of sd Bankrupt
And reciting that sd p'tal sum of £400 still
remained due & owing on the security of the firstly
thirdly recited Indre And sd p'tal sum of £250
still remained due & owing on the security of the
of the 2nd thirdly recited Indre but all int
on sd sums of £400 & £250 had been paid up
to date of those presents
And reciting that sd C. F. South as such Trustee
as aforesd had agreed to sell to sd Risden Gregory
the sd hereds: (subj to the p'tal sums then due as
aforesd under the thirdly recited Indres of Mortgage
& the int thenceforth to become due for the consideration
the price of £8
It was witnessed that in pursuance of sd
agreement & in consn of sum of £8 then paid by
sd R. Gregory to sd C. F South (the recet &c) The
sd C. F South as Trustee thereby conveyed unto sd R Gregory
(inter alia)
The before abstd premes
To hold the same (subj nevertheless to the thirdly
recited Indres of Mortgage & the several sums of
£400 & £250 thereby secured & all int thenceforth to
become due in respect of the same)
Unto & to the use of sd Risden Gregory in
fee simple
Cov: with sd C. F South by sd R. Gregory his hrs exors
adrs & assns to pay sd p'tal sum of £400 & £250 & all int:
thenceforth to become due thereon respectly & would keep
indemnified the sd C. F South & his Estate & Effects from all

claims & demands ow Afc thro'
Executed by sd C.F. South & attested

nder 1898 By Indenture of this date made betwn sd Charles
Mynors of 1st part sd Risden Gregory of 2nd part & Mary
Ann Bennion Spinster & Louisa Jane Bennion Spinster both
of Gradwich in the Coy of Stafford of 3rd part & supplemental
to the following Indres (1) The befe abst Indre of 1st Oct. 1895
(thirnar called the f'pal Indre) (2) the befe abst Indre of
11th May 1898

Reciting that sd f'pal sum of £400 remained owing
under f'pal Indre but all int thereon had been paid up to date of those
presents

And reciting that sd M. A. Bennion & L. J. Bennion
at request of sa Risden Gregory has agreed to pay to
sd Chas Mynors the sum of £400 ow having a
transfer of sd Mortgage debt & the interest thron
& the securities for the same in the manner thrnar
expressed

It was witnessed that in consn of sum of £400 to sd
C. Mynors paid by sd M. A. Bennion & L. J. Bennion in
equal shares ow or before the exon of those presents
(the receipt acting) The sd Chas Mynors as Mortgagee thby
assnd unto sd M. A. Bennion & L. J. Bennion The sd f'pal
sum of £400 secured by the f'pal Indre & all int thereon
to become due thron & the full benefit of all securities for the
same

To hold the same unto the sd M. A. Bennion &
L. J. Bennion absolutely in equal shares as Tenants
in common

And it was also witned that for the consn afsd the
sd Chas Mynors as Mortgagee thby conveyed & the sd
R. Gregory as Beneficial Owner thby conveyed & confirmed
unto sd M. A. Bennion & L. J. Bennion

All the Lands & heres: comprised in
the f'pal Indre

To hold the same
unto & to the use of sd M. A. Bennion & L. E. Bennion in fee simple subject to such right or equity of redemption as was then subsisting thereon by virtue of the p'pal Indre

Covt. by sd R. Gregory with sd M. A. Bennion & L. E. Bennion to pay to them in equal shares the p'pal sum of £ on the 1st March then next with int thereon after rate aforesd & also so long after that day as any p'pal sum or any part thereof remained owing to continue to pay to them int thereon at the same rate upon the half-yrly days appointed for payment thereof by the P'pal Indre.

Executed by sd Chas. Mynors & Risden Gregory & attested

Jan 1897 By his Will of this date sd Risden Gregory gave devised & bequeathed all real & personal Estate of which he might die seized or possessed (including Trust & Mortgage Estates) unto his Wife Louisa Emma Gregory her heirs & assigns absolutely & he appointed his sd Wife sole Executrix of his sd Will

Executed by sd R. Gregory & attested

25 July 1903 Testator died

[illegible] March 1903. Will proved at Lichfield by sd L. E. Gregory sole Executrix

8th September 1904 Sd L. E. Gregory intermarried with & became the Wife of Frederick Chandler of Gratton, Winster near Matlock Bath in the Co. of Derby Dairy Manager